

NEWS SUMMARY

GENERAL

Queen's police chief resigns

The Queen's policeman Commander Michael Tressell, 50, has resigned after admitting a homosexual relationship with a male prostitute.

Yesterday, there were questions as to why Home Secretary William Whitelaw was not told about Mr Tressell's resignation for 48 hours.

Mr Whitelaw said Commander Tressell resigned on Saturday morning but that he was not told until 9.15 am yesterday.

Mr Whitelaw was said to be "very shocked" by the disclosure and Tory MPs were last night wondering how much longer he would remain Home Secretary. Tressell was vetted, Page 10.

Fagan move

Michael Fagan, 30, will not be prosecuted over the incident in which he is said to have entered the Queen's bedroom, Bow Street court heard. He was remanded in custody, though, for other alleged offences.

Rail pay

British Rail is likely to call on the forthcoming arbitration tribunal on railway pay to make no wage award until workers agree to productivity increases in a ballot. Back Page

Basra battle

Irani resistance appears to have halted Iran's six-day-old invasion although heavy fighting is reported north-east of Basra. Back Page

Iran attack

Iran attacked a UN committee reviewing its human rights record, saying human rights are a myth and declaring as insignificant the number of executions since the Islamic revolution.

Troops to stay

Angola said Cuban troops will remain in the country until it receives guarantees there will be no South African raids on its territory, after the independence of Namibia. Page 4. Editorial comment, Page 16

Fencer injured

Former world fencing champion Vladimir Smirnov was in a coma after suffering an eye injury in the World Fencing Championships, in Rome.

Politician freed

Leading Pakistani politician Dr Ghulam Hussain was freed after being held by immigration officials for four days after arriving in Britain, using a Swedish passport.

Ferry halted

The Liverpool-Belfast ferry will be halted until Friday. The only ship on the route has engine trouble.

Boys rescued

Police constable Don Tomkinson climbed down the face of a 10ft tower block to rescue two boys trapped on a 10th floor ledge.

England win

England 295-8 (55 overs, innings closed) beat Pakistan 222 all out (49.5 overs) in the second One-day Test, at Old Trafford.

Briefly . . .

Polish, East German and Soviet troops started manoeuvres in East Germany.

Ten children were killed and 30 injured when awnings on a school at Trichur, southern India, collapsed.

Decision on the Pope's possible visit to Poland is expected in a few days. Page 3

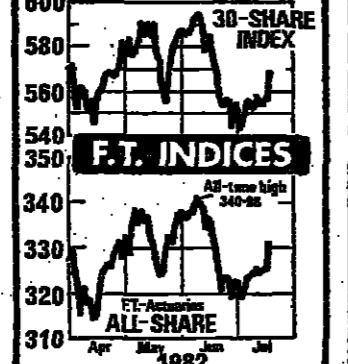
BUSINESS

Gilts and equities stronger; £ rises

• **GILTS** benefited from pressure for cheaper credit at home and in the U.S. Shorts rose a point, selected high-coupon longs gained up to 11. FT Government Securities index rose 0.79 to 71.98, its highest since July 28, 1980. Page 27.

• **EQUITIES** were overshadowed by gilts, but moved ahead strongly aided by the rail dispute settlement and the

FT INDICES



early tone of Wall Street. FT 30 Share index rose 13.9 to 569.6. FT-Actuaries All-share index was up 1.6 per cent at 331.42. Page 27

• **STERLING** gained 1.5c to \$1.7375. It also rose to DM 4.29, SwFr 3.65 (SwFr 3.625) and FFr 11.9125 (FFr 11.855). Trade weighted index was 91.4 (90.8). Page 28

• **DOLLAR** weakened on news of a rise in U.S. money supply. It fell to DM 2.4883 (DM 2.4775) and SwFr 2.099 (SwFr 2.1025) but was firmer at Yen 254.5 (Yen 254). Trade weighted index was 126.2 (121). Page 28

• **YEN** cash price fell £225 to £6,405 a tonne in London. Page 22.

• **WALL STREET** was down 2.19 to 826.48 near the close. Page 26

• **CHANCELLOR** Helmut Schmidt of West Germany and Italian Foreign Minister Sig Emilio Colombo visited separately U.S. Secretary of State Mr George Shultz to try to defuse arguments between the U.S. and Europe. Back Page

• **UK GOVERNMENT** might instruct all companies to ignore U.S. restrictions on equipment for the Siberian gas pipeline. Page 10

• **LEASEING** of plant and equipment is still rising, against the economic trend. Page 8

• **RETAIL** trade rose in June, but probably because of earlier summer sales rather than a spending boom. Page 8.

• **FRANCE** should launch a three-year FFr 1bn (£83.95m) investment programme in biotechnology, said a commission of experts set up by the government. Page 24

• **YUGOSLAV** authorities have provided £280m this year to help banks meet their foreign obligations. Page 3.

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• **ALEXANDERS DISCOUNT** discount house concern lifted interim dividend from 5.5p to 6.5p net per £1 share on increased profits. Page 18; Lex, Back Page.

• **CROWN HOUSE**, diversified group, pre-tax profits rose 22.5 per cent to £2.56m in the year to end March. Page 19.

• **ALCOA** has postponed completion of an aluminium smelter in Australia. Page 25.

• **BURROUGHS**, U.S. computer manufacturer, lifted first-half earnings from \$53.6m (£30.85m) to \$63.6m. Page 23

Legislation to sell 51% of British Telecom planned for November

BY GUY DE JONQUIERES

THE Government announced plans yesterday to introduce legislation in November enabling it to sell up to 51 per cent of British Telecom (BT) to private investors. But it has firmly ruled out a share sale before the next general election.

Mr Patrick Jenkins, Industry Secretary, told the Commons the proposals would free BT from "the web of government interference and controls" and allow it wide scope to compete on a commercial basis in the telecommunications market.

Once 51 per cent of the shares had been sold, BT would be outside the public sector borrowing requirement and the government's external financing limits. It would be free to seek financing for its investment programme from the market, instead of borrowing from the Exchequer or through higher tariffs.

This could eventually mean a reduction of between 3 and 5 per cent in otherwise likely tariff increases. BT, which plans

to invest about £2.2bn this year, finances 90 per cent of investment from its own revenues.

The Government's announcement was strongly criticised by the Labour Party and the Post Office Engineering Union.

Stan Orme, Labour's industry spokesman, said the party intended to make the planned sale of shares an issue at the next general election.

The statement was received coolly by BT's board, which said it had not been consulted. It said many complex questions had still to be resolved and warned that the changes should not place an excessive burden on its operations.

Mr Jenkins expected the legislation to be on the statute book in about a year. But he excluded a sale of shares during this parliament because it would be "coloured" by the approach of the next election, which must be held by May 1984.

He would not say how much he expected to be raised by a sale of shares, which could take

place in one or more tranches. But ministers are understood to be thinking in terms of £2.5bn to £3bn for the full 51 per cent interest.

The Government's proposals are set out in a White Paper. They also include the following provisions.

• The creation of an Office of Telecommunications, to be modelled on the Office of Fair Trading, which would ensure fair competition and prices. The office, which would be accountable to the industry secretary, would start operating soon after the new legislation came into effect next year.

• Turning BT into a public limited company in preparation for the sale of shares.

• The granting to BT of an operating licence, the terms of which are still to be negotiated. The licence, which would be

Continued on Back Page

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Chrysler boosts profit to \$107m

By Terry Byland in New York

CHRYSLER, the third-largest U.S. motor manufacturer, made a profit of \$106.9m (£61.5m) in the second quarter of this year, a major step forward along the road to recovery from the crisis that forced the company to seek U.S. Government financial help three years ago.

In the same period last year Chrysler earned \$20.7m, largely from activities it has since disposed of. Mr Lee Iacocca, chairman, in his most ebullient form, said this profit comfortably exceeded the most optimistic forecasts from Wall Street's car industry analysts.

For the full year, he said, Chrysler could earn \$150m on operations which, with the exception of the sale of shares, would start operating soon after the new profit cut to about \$100m.

Mr Iacocca told a crowded

meeting in the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel that Chrysler had amassed a cash holding of more than \$1bn to offset its \$1.2bn of government-backed loans.

The company plans to repay these loans by 1985, he disclosed. Although in theory Chrysler could then resume dividend payments, it still has a further \$800m in long-term debt.

Mr Iacocca ascribed the rise in earnings from the comparable period last year to the company's policy of cutting costs and improving efficiency. As expected at a time of weakness throughout the U.S. car industry, Chrysler sales were 10.5 per cent down in the quarter. The rise in earnings indicates the success of the cost-cutting exercise of the manufacture of the Omni-Horizon, Dodge and LeBaron models.

Mr Iacocca would not be drawn on prospects for the latest round of wage negotiations with the United Auto Workers, which open today. Because of its financial problems Chrysler has been able to negotiate lower wage rates than its competitors over the past two years and pays about \$3 an hour less than General Motors.

However, Mr Norman Fowler, Social Services Secretary, said in a statement last night initial reports indicated hospitals had "coped much better than might have been expected.

Medical staff, the vast majority of nurses and many thousands of other hospital workers have continued to care for patients. I pay tribute to their work."

Mr Fowler went on to appeal to NHS employees to give up their industrial action and negotiate on the £400m that had been made available for wages.

It is time that this shameful strike was called off," he said.

The Department of Health and Social Services claimed last night that several hospitals had been left without emergency



Trevor Humphries
Before the health service union's protest march on County Hall, London. A policeman talks to a nurse whose placard asks if the TUC will "betray" the NHS

UK may seek steel pact with U.S.

BY PAUL CHEESERIGHT, WORLD TRADE EDITOR

BRITAIN is seriously considering breaking ranks with its European partners by attempting to negotiate a bilateral steel quota agreement with the American market.

Negotiators could be sent to Washington later this week.

Their aim would be to ensure that British Steel Corporation maintains a place on the U.S. market. Since last month some of its products have faced a 40 per cent duty which has effectively barred them from the market.

There is increasing pessimism, however, about the possibilities of reaching such an agreement. Since last year talks have failed to define a market share in the U.S. for European suppliers acceptable to both the U.S. steel companies and the

European producers. The British decision on whether to act alone will be made after today's EEC Council of Ministers meeting, at which the Commission will present its latest assessment of the prospects for reaching agreement.

The UK representative is Mr Peter Rees, the Minister for Trade.

Viscount Etienne Davignon, the EEC Commissioner for Industry, will report to the Council on his inconclusive round of talks in Washington at the end of last week, with Mr Malcolm Baldrige, the U.S.

Confidence on Back Page

BSC aims for £75m trading profit. Back Page

Schmidt and Colombo to see Shultz. Back Page

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Robert Graham reports on political prospects as Madrid's centrist government limps to an early election

Disarray shortens odds on Spanish Socialist victory

LIKE MANY bar owners, and Sr Landelino Lavilla, the Speaker of the House, has been brought in to stop the rot and stiffen morale. This has created even more uncertainty, though, heightening the feeling that the administration cannot last through until spring next year and that it will opt for elections in November or December.

Now he has erected a mock altar below it—a black cloth draped over a box with a crucifix irreverently bearing a referee's whistle and two candles on either side. By the poster of the team, which Miguel and his fellow Spaniards feel performed so badly, is the crudely scribbled caption: "May they rest in peace." If Spaniards cared as much about the performance of their Government as that of their football team, the same caption would apply.

Spain is drifting in a pre-electoral vacuum. The only certainty is that the political map of Spain, which has existed since the death of Franco in November 1975 and was formalised by the June 1977 democratic elections, is about to disappear. There is a strong possibility, however, that Spain faces the prospect of a Socialist administration for the first time since 1936 and the onset of the Civil War.

Lame duck

The Government of Sr Leopoldo Calvo Sotelo has become a lame duck administration. It is limping towards early general elections with the exhaustion of a runner who sees crossing the finishing line as a feat in itself. The Government has lost the will to act and a spate of desertions since last December have crippled the capacity of the ruling Unión de Centro Democrática (UCD) to operate with a viable majority in Parliament.

Sr Calvo Sotelo has stepped down from the party leadership



Landelino Lavilla, the new president of the ruling UCD, which is under challenge from the Socialists led by Felipe González (right)—Spain's most popular politician

with Sr Fraga and Alianza Popular. Sr Fraga talks of an alliance of "the natural majority." Such an alliance—inevitable according to several commentators—leaves the way open for the Socialists to move into the moderate centre territory it has always contested.

On the admittedly partial evidence of the Andalucía regional election, where the Socialists got 51 per cent of the vote, UCD surrendered this ground. Sr Felipe González, the Socialist party's 40-year-old leader, has become the most popular politician in the country.

In the past two years Sr González has quashed a sizeable left-wing dissident element and done his best to present the image of a moderate, disciplined party. Not only has he gained support from the centre but also from disaffected Communists. The bogey of a powerful Communist Party has vanished: the party has lost the mainstream

of its Eurocommunist figures, disillusioned by the authoritarian leadership of Sr Santiago Carrillo.

The appeal of Communism to voters has suffered drastically and the party can rely on no more than a hard core support by 5 per cent of the electorate.

This leaves the Socialists as the Party of the Left, and presents Spain with the prospect of a Socialist administration.

In broad political terms, therefore, the shake-up is ranging from a moderate, well-organised, but untested, Socialist party against a loose right-wing coalition with several maverick splinter groups. The powerful Basque and Catalan nationalist parties act as floating elements of support in the middle. It is not a crude left-right confrontation but, in certain circumstances, it could become thus polarised.

UCD was formed from 14 different groupings under the leadership of Sr Suarez to fight the 1977 elections and only for

mally constituted two months afterwards—the implication being that it would take a different shape, or shapes, if it had not won the elections.

There was no consistent ideology among the groups but their various leaders were all products of what could be called the "political class" created under Franco: people either mildly opposed to the régime yet dependent upon it or directly involved in the régime itself—like Sr Suarez, one-time secretary general of the Mo-

ocracy. In particular, UCD has

permits the dangerous situation of the military to remain as arbiters of the nation. The most powerful factor preventing a Socialist victory would be a propaganda campaign saying the military would not tolerate the "Reds." Sufficient important interests are concerned about a Socialist victory to allow this to happen.

Sr Gonzalez is acutely aware of this danger, which is why he has pitched all his statements in such moderate tones. Indeed, this moderation has earned the Socialists the label from some as "UCD without ties," the difference being more of style than content as the solutions to the problems allow little margin of difference.

The fundamental problems affecting the modernisation of Spain have yet to be resolved: the role of the armed forces and their relationship with civil authority, the relationship between Church and State (especially over education), the relationship between central government and the regions, the creation of an impartial judiciary, the regional imbalance of wealth and the prevalence of enormous disparities in income distribution.

Until now, the framework to tackle some of the problems has been established—for which UCD can take the credit. However, the essential nature of the problems themselves has not been tackled and the pace of reform has slowed noticeably in the wake of the abortive coup of February, 1981.

Both Sr Suarez and Sr Calvo Sotelo's government have been afraid of antagonising the military, of upsetting the Catholic hierarchy, of colliding with financial interests over fiscal reform and liberalisation, of shaking up a conservative judiciary and prodding a complacent entrenched bureaucracy.

The military now enjoy exaggerated deference. No one has had the courage to act on the basis that the coup failed, that the military were divided and ultimately unwilling to rock the boat.

It can be argued that UCD's

troubles and the changing

nature of the political parties

is a natural process of adjustment in Spain's infant demo-

cracy. This therefore permits the dangerous situation of the military to remain as arbiters of the nation. The most powerful factor preventing a Socialist victory would be a propaganda campaign saying the military would not tolerate the "Reds." Sufficient important interests are concerned about a Socialist victory to allow this to happen.

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Mr Kjeld Olesen, Denmark's

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Portugal resolves EEC banks question

By Diana Smith in Lisbon

PORTUGAL has been able to resolve the question of the EEC banks' right to set up in the country after its accession to the Community.

Lisbon had wanted a 10-year transition before EEC banks had the full right of establishment in Portugal. This, it argued, was to protect its nationalised banks against a sudden influx of competition, and to adjust them gradually to new demands.

Although the EEC wanted only five years, they compromised on seven at a deputies' meeting last Friday.

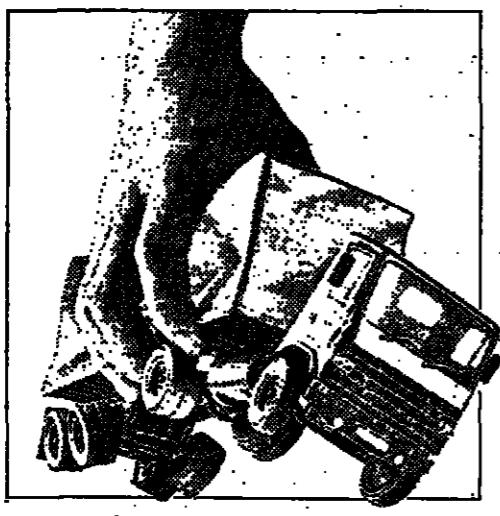
However, the negotiators failed to agree on the proportion of their resources EEC banks will be allowed to raise locally in Portugal. While the EEC wants the figure to be 50 per cent, Portugal wants 38 per cent, arguing that its banking system is too weak to bear more.

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W. German exports to East bloc decline

BY STEWART FLEMING IN FRANKFURT

AMONG the industrialised countries, West Germany remains the most important trading partner for the Eastern European Communist states.

But its share of Western exports to the East has been declining steadily in the last few years and so too has the importance of exports to the East bloc within West Germany's own foreign trade, and the size of the Federal Republic's current account surplus with the East.

This is the conclusion which emerges from an analysis of the Federal Republic's financial relationships with the Communist bloc in the July monthly report of the Bundesbank, the West German Central Bank.

The report supports the arguments of those who have maintained that U.S. criticism of West Germany's close economic relationships with the East Bloc

is founded in part on an exaggeration of the importance of East European trade to the Federal Republic.

The Bundesbank says that since 1975 the share of Communist bloc exports as a proportion of West Germany's total exports has fallen steadily from 7.9 per cent in that year to 4.9 per cent in 1981 and that in the current year the decline is continuing.

(The figures exclude trade with East Germany, which is treated separately in West Germany's current account as inner German trade.)

Thus, whereas in the first five months of this year the Federal Republic's exports were 15 per cent higher, East bloc trade was down by 2 per cent.

Moreover, West Germany's share of Western industrial country exports to the East bloc, which was 25 per cent at its high point in 1975, had fallen to 18 per cent by 1981.

The Bundesbank says that the explanation for the decline in West German trade with the East bloc at a time when a weak D-mark has been helping the country to regain market shares in other markets, reflects shifts in the structure of East-West trade relations.

It says that the Federal Republic, as the world's most important exporter of investment goods, has suffered from the economy measures of East bloc countries.

They have been holding back because of foreign exchange shortages and have also been increasing their imports of agricultural products and food as a result of poor harvests.

Thus, whereas in 1978 investment goods exports accounted for 47 per cent of West German exports to the East bloc, by 1981 the share was down to 41 per cent.

But the Central Bank points

out that imports from the Soviet Union, up 70 per cent in the period, were up by 30 per cent.

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EUROPEAN NEWS

Belgrade provides \$487m to help beleaguered banks

BY ALEKSANDER LEBIĆ IN BELGRADE

THE YUGOSLAV authorities have provided \$487m (2270m) this year to help hard-pressed Yugoslav banks meet their foreign obligations, and nearly half of this — \$238.5m — has gone to one big institution, Privredna Banka of Zagreb, which still faces serious difficulties.

This was announced by Mr Janko Smole, a member of the ruling Federal Executive Council which is Yugoslavia's equivalent of a cabinet. He was speaking in Parliament late last week, during a session in which four laws were also passed to reduce temporarily banks' exposure as well as to cut investment and budgetary spending.

Mr Zvone Dragan, the vice-premier in charge of the economy, has made it clear that while the Yugoslav Government is willing to let chronically weak banks and companies go under, it will set to it that their foreign borrowings are repaid in full.

This was the first precise indication of the help Privredna Banka has received from the National Bank this year, although the nature of its problems, which caused it to be late earlier this year on some foreign debt repayments, was already known.

The Zagreb-based bank has over-extended its lending for a number of ambitious projects in Croatia, including a petrochemical joint venture between INA, the Yugoslav oil company, and Dow Chemical of the U.S., an oil pipeline, motorway construction and other big infrastructure plans.

Privredna Banka is what is known in Yugoslav parlance as a "basic" bank, operating on

its own, as distinct from an "associated" bank which groups together a number of "basic" banks usually from different republics. The associated banks are large and well placed to help any of their constituent banks. But Croatia, of which Zagreb is the capital, happens to be the only Yugoslav republic without an associated bank.

However, a rescue operation is under way for Privredna Banka. Mr Neven Barac, its president, has been demoted, and faces charges over economic misdemeanours. He has been replaced by Mr Tomislav Bodovinac, a former vice-governor of the Yugoslav National Bank.

Meanwhile, the new legislation prohibits banks from guaranteeing investment loans — from domestic or foreign sources — which cannot be repaid from existing company funds. The laws which run only until the end of the year also bar banks from lending to cover construction cost overruns.

A limit of 17 per cent has been set on the increase in budgetary expenditure this year, and some social services, health and education, in particular, have been told they will have their funds blocked for three months. The Government of Mrs Milka Planinc is thus tightening even further the austerity strategy in effect for the past three years.

But prices are rising faster than expected. In the first half of 1982 retail prices rose 14.6 per cent on the December 1981 level, while the cost of living, a wider measure which includes services and housing costs, increased by 17.2 per cent over the same period.

Yugoslavian call for crackdown in Kosovo

BY DAVID BUCHAN

THE YUGOSLAV parliament has called on prosecutors and judges to crack down on "anti-state" and "unlawful activity" in the troubled southern province of Kosovo.

The parliamentary resolution, urging "more resolute legal and other steps" against the unrest in Kosovo, was passed last Friday, the same day that a Kosovo court sentenced another nine ethnic Albanians to up to four years in jail for belonging to anti-state organisations.

Some sentences meted out

recently have been as long as 15 years. Most of these relate to riots last year in which nine people were killed and several hundred injured as ethnic Albanians took to the streets to demand more autonomy.

But what is disturbing the parliament in Belgrade is the continuing pattern of communal strife in Kosovo, mainly in the form of harassment by the ethnic Albanian majority against Serbs or Montenegrins who have been leaving the region.

U.S. envoy in Paris hits back in protocol row

BY DAVID HOLSEGO IN PARIS

THE UNNAMED Pentagon official who last week accused France of concluding a secret protocol with the Soviet Union was effectively disowned yesterday by Mr Evan Galtzoff, the U.S. ambassador in Paris.

But Mr Galtzoff also underlined the dangers that Alsthom Atlantique, the French power engineering group, would run under U.S. law if it broke the U.S. embargo and supplied rotor blades for the Siberian gas pipeline.

The warning came amid conflicting reports that the French Government would instruct Alsthom to ignore the recent U.S. decision to extend sanctions on high technology products for the pipeline. Alsthom has a FFr 400m (£35m) contract to

supply 40 sets of rotor blades, made under licence from General Electric of the U.S., as spare parts.

The ambassador said that the Pentagon official was not speaking on behalf of the U.S. Government and that his remarks "created a misunderstanding that should have been avoided." He said he thought that "we were at fault in bringing this up at this time."

The official's accusation that the secret protocol had undermined U.S. attempts before the Versailles economic summit to secure a united Western front to curb credits to the Soviet Union caused an uproar in Paris with strongly-worded denials from the Government and front page coverage in the Press.

Industrialists hesitant on economic outlook

BY DAVID MARCH IN PARIS

FRENCH industrialists, caught in the pincer grip of the Government's domestic price freeze and the inflationary weakness of the franc, have become extremely hesitant about the economic outlook, according to the latest survey from the Bank of France.

The survey, the latest in a series of gloomy reports on the French economy since last month's devaluation, says companies intend to maintain their present low level of output until the holiday season ends in September.

But their forecasts for the final quarter of the year — when

the Government faces the tricky question of re-negotiating a smooth ending for its four-month wage and price freeze — are "extremely reserved." Many industrialists declined even to make any predictions.

Industrial production rose slightly in June, following the flat performance of the previous two months.

In a separate report on the economy, the official statistics institute, Insee, forecasts that the French inflation rate could be kept down to about 10.6 per cent this year because of the price and wage freeze.

Turkish economic package to be published soon

BY METİN MUNIR IN ISTANBUL

TURKEY'S new economy overlord, Mr Adnan Baser Kafaoğlu, is working on a comprehensive stabilisation package, expected to be published in a month, officials said.

The package will contain Turkey's economic programme for the next 12 months. Mr Kafaoğlu faces a series of delicate choices and has decided against rushing things through, the officials added.

His most difficult choice is how to inject liveliness into the

depressed domestic market without fuelling inflation.

Probably the biggest problem he faces concerns the cost of loans, which has brought many businesses to the brink of insolvency and caused a large drop in most banks' lending portfolios.

Mr Kafaoğlu became Minister of Finance last week, replacing Mr Turgut Ozal, the Deputy Prime Minister, who resigned as supreme planner of the Turkish economy.



Gen Jaruzelski

Jaruzelski increases dominance in Poland

BY CHRISTOPHER BOBINSKI IN WARSAW

THE CHANGES last week in the Polish party leadership point to the continued dominance of General Wojciech Jaruzelski.

It is likely that his standing will drop another notch in the eyes of the public on Wednesday if, in a speech to parliament, he fails to fulfil expectations of major changes in the marital law regime.

Apart from freeing inferiors, the main emphasis is likely to be on unveiling "The Patriotic Movement for National Renewal," based on a network of committees set up soon after martial law was imposed last December.

The committees are seen by the authorities and presented in the media as groups of people of good will. They support the military authorities in their task of setting Poland's house in order after the devastation of the last year.

Some 5,000 are in existence, but they inspire little public confidence and are "made up of people who support the authorities in most situations" as one party member admitted.

The authorities have decided to widen the formula by giving the movement far-reaching, if vague, powers of consultation over official decisions and they have formally included the three small Catholic groups represented in parliament.

The move is typical of General Jaruzelski's more cautious style which the changes in the party leadership will give him a chance to develop.

The most important change is the removal of Mr Stefan Olszowski, an ambitious man and potential contender for the top post, away from day-to-day handling of the media — probably to become Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Mr Jan Glowczyk, editor of an economic weekly, will be taking over, but the change means in effect that control of media policy will be fully in the hands of General Jaruzelski and his allies such as Mr Mieczysław Rakowski, himself a journalist, and a Deputy Premier.

The change is unlikely to bring any liberalisation, but possibly a change of style to a more persuasive tone.

Mr Olszowski ran the media in March 1982 during the crackdown on students, and many of his supporters from those days who were given influential posts are now likely to be replaced.

At the same time, General Jaruzelski has ditched Mr Hieronim Kubiat, a professor of sociology and one of the most open-minded members of the Politburo, who has lost his responsibility for culture and science.

For the moment, his responsibilities are expected to be taken over by Mr Josef Czrek, who will continue to oversee foreign affairs in the party while yielding his ministerial post to Mr Olszowski.

While these changes went smoothly, the sacking from the politburo of Mr Jan Labecki, a worker from the Lenin shipyard in Gdańsk produced a ripple of revolt in the central committee.

Thirty-one members voted against and 25 abstained, one-third of the members voting and present, over his resignation and this shows that there is a groundswell of feeling against removing officials representing the party grassroots in the central committee.

General Jaruzelski also brought four new members into the central committee, which should, in theory, be elected by the party congress.

In each case, a sizeable minority of central committee members voted against, and in the case of Mr Stanisław Bejger, the new party chief in Gdańsk, 65 voted against his being allowed on to the central committee.

But it is the party hardliners who are making play of such breaches of party rules, and it is they who are to be heard demanding that the leadership stick to the party statutes.

Tobacco groups fined £800,000 for price fixing

BY JOHN WYLES IN BRUSSELS

THE EUROPEAN Commission has outlawed some of the key marketing practices of Dutch subsidiaries of major international tobacco companies and levied fines of more than £800,000 for breaches of EEC competition rules.

The fines have been imposed on manufacturers and importers as punishment for price-fixing agreements made

in 1974, 1975 and 1978.

These aimed at stabilising market shares and, according to the Commission, amounted to a "serious breach" of Article 85 of the Treaty of

1974.

The companies affected and the fines levied are Sigarettenfabrik Ed Laurens Gravenhage (Fr 1.108.737), British American Tobacco (Nederland), Amsterdam (Fr 913.094), Turmac Tobacco

(Fr 847.873), R. J. Reynolds Tobacco (Fr 391.326), Philip Morris Holland, Amstelveen (Fr 326.105), De Koninklijke Bedrijven Theodorus Niemeyer, Groningen (Fr 260.884).

In its ruling, the Commission claims that this practice restricted competition between manufacturers and importers and infringed Article 85.

The Commission also objected to agreements

according to the total volume of purchases by the retailer from manufacturers participating in the arrangement rather than according to the sales of individual products.

The Commission claims that this practice restricted competition between manufacturers and importers and infringed Article 85.

The Commission also objected to agreements

fixed the profit margins for retailers. This prevented retailers from negotiating their margins with individual suppliers.

The Commission's decisions will require the dismantling of the Dutch tobacco industry's extensive self-regulation. They are closely in line with rules issued in 1978

breaking up similar agreements in Belgium and Luxembourg.



Herr Genscher

Arab summit is wanted, Genscher says

BY OUR BRUSSELS CORRESPONDENT

JORDAN and Egypt are showing growing interest in holding a summit of moderate Arab states in a bid to end the present turmoil in the Lebanon and prepare the ground for a broader Middle East peace settlement.

This was reported to EEC Foreign Ministers in Brussels yesterday by Herr Hans-Dietrich Genscher, the West German Foreign Minister, and Mr Dries van Agt, the acting Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Netherlands. Both have just returned from visits to

Herr Genscher told his colleagues that King Hussein of Jordan was gloomy about events in the Lebanon. But both he and President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt were anxious for an Arab summit aimed at charting a way out of the present crisis.

The two leaders are said to be willing to settle for a partial summit of moderate Arab states if hardliners such as Libya are unwilling to attend.

It is thought that one of the aims of such a summit might be to secure Palestinian acceptance of the so-called Fahd peace plan.

Drawn up a year ago by the

then Crown Prince Fahd, the plan involved, among other things, recognition by the Palestinians of Israel's right to exist.

EEC Ministers decided yesterday to step up pressure on Mr George Shultz, the U.S. Secretary of State, to acknowledge the importance of negotiations with the Palestinians, including the Palestine Liberation Organisation.

M. Claude Chevignon, the French Foreign Minister, said that the evolution of the PLO's position away from military towards political priorities could make this easier. "There will be no solution in the Lebanon

without more strenuous efforts to settle the Palestinian problem," said one Minister.

Community Foreign Ministers were also concerned about the worsening conflict between Iran and Iraq. M. Chevignon warned that it was not only threatening the stability of the Gulf but the wider balance in the Middle East.

• Greece told the Lebanese Government yesterday that it was ready to contribute a battalion of 300 troops to a multinational peace force in West Beirut, where the PLO is holding out. Jordan and the Gulf war. Page 4

Italy counts cost of heatwave

BY JAMES BUXTON IN ROME

MUCH OF Italy yesterday was back under a blanket of intense heat after rainstorms had only partially halted the damage caused by one of the hottest summers on record.

The storms which hit much of the country on Sunday and early yesterday appeared to have damped down many of the forest fires which have been raging for the past few days, mainly in the south — in Calabria and

Campagnia — but also near Rome and in Liguria.

At one stage on Sunday a Nato headquarters near Naples was said to be in danger from fires in the surrounding woods.

The fires have long-term detrimental effects on the countryside, making it more prone to erosion and easier for

developers to build on. But more serious short-term economic damage has been caused by the two-month drought.

This has destroyed fields of cereal, maize and sugar beet and has also destroyed some vegetables. The worst-hit areas are mainly in the south — in Sicily where in many parts it has hardly rained this year, and in Calabria, Basilicata and Puglia,

Decision soon on Pope's Polish visit

BY OUR ROME CORRESPONDENT

A FINAL decision should be made in the next few days on whether the Pope will visit Poland next month. The Pope

is due to meet Mr Josef Czrek, the Polish Foreign Minister, today at his summer residence at Castiglione.

Pope John Paul would like

to visit Poland for the celebration of the 600th anniversary of the Black Madonna of Czestochowa on August 26. But although the Polish bishops recently repeated their invitation, the Polish Government is believed to want a postponement, on the grounds that the political situation is too delicate.

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OVERSEAS NEWS

Washington-Luanda talks fuel hopes for Namibia settlement

BY QUENTIN PEEL, AFRICA EDITOR

TALKS BEING HELD today in Washington and in Luanda, the capital of Angola, are seen as a critical step towards a peaceful settlement in Namibia (South West Africa).

The talks involve two key remaining issues—the presence of Cuban forces in Angola, and the role of South African-trained and locally-recruited military units in Namibia during the transition to independence.

Diplomats in London and New York with long experience of the negotiations are more optimistic than at any stage in the four years of Western-led efforts to implement a UN settlement plan. They believe that a settlement by the end of the month is possible, with a mid-August ceasefire declared in the 15-year guerrilla war.

Senior U.S. and South African officials, including Dr Chester Crocker, the U.S. assistant Secretary of State for Africa, and South Africa's top Namibia specialists—Dr Brand Fourie, the ambassador in Washington, and Mr Riaan Ecksteen, the former ambassador to the UN—will meet in Washington today.

At the same time, General Vernon Walters, President Reagan's ambassador at large is in Luanda for talks with the Angolan Government on the withdrawal of Cuban troops from that country—which South Africa regards as a crucial factor in the settlement.

If the two sets of bilateral

Drop in Gulf oil price level 'unlikely'

By Ray Dafter, Energy Editor

GULF OIL producers are expected to maintain their oil prices around the reference level of \$34 (£19.50) a barrel in spite of speculation within the Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries last week that they would reduce their rates.

But it was becoming clear yesterday that Opec's total rate of production has risen substantially above the 17.5m barrels a day considered by many members as essential to keep worldwide supply and demand in balance.

The authoritative Middle East Economic Survey reported that Saudi Arabia—the organisation's leading exporter—was unlikely to change its pricing or production policies in spite of the collapse of the Opec ministerial meeting earlier this month.

Saudi Arabia had urged Nigeria, Algeria and Libya to raise their prices by \$1.50 a barrel to reflect the quality and distribution benefits of African crude above oil exported from the Gulf. When the African delegates refused there was considerable speculation that Saudi Arabia and its Gulf allies would lower their prices to achieve the desired differential.

The survey said it was unlikely that Saudi Arabia would demonstrate its power by cutting prices and boosting output. It suggested that the Saudis had two options:

• A token cut of about 50 cents a barrel. Such a move would be ineffective and could trigger a price war.

• Maintaining the \$34 reference price and keeping the production ceiling at 7m b/d.

A senior Qatari Government official was quoted by the daily Gulf Times as saying that Qatar would also maintain its present production and pricing levels. Qatar produces around 300,000 barrels a day and charges \$24.30 a barrel for its Marine 36 degrees API (American Petroleum Institute) oil.

Meanwhile, the latest edition of Petroleum Intelligence Weekly estimates that Opec production last month climbed to at least 18.2m b/d compared with 16.7m b/d in May and 16.3m b/d in April.

Iran's advance into Iraq

BY MICHAEL THOMPSON-NOEL IN SYDNEY

THE AUSTRALIAN Government yesterday overturned calls for tariff reductions and lower protection levels in a major policy declaration. Instead, it unveiled substantial new assistance for mining and industry.

Significantly, the Government announced plans for an accelerated depreciation allowance for industry and more generous write-offs.

The measures will cost an estimated A\$85m (£53m) in the current financial year, rising to A\$275m by 1988. The aim would be to counter the continuing effects of the international recession, and prime the pump for a snap election.

Mr Malcolm Fraser, the Prime Minister, has recently stepped up his criticism of the Australian Labor Party, and in Canberra yesterday virtually challenged Mr Bill Hayden, the

ALP leader, to provoke him into going to the polls.

Mr Fraser said at the weekend that the Labor Party had shown it "lacks the stability which Australia wants."

The Prime Minister stressed yesterday that Australia was feeling the impact of plummeting commodity prices, weak export demand, high interest rates and a fall in industrial competitiveness because domestic wage settlements, including claims for shorter hours, were out of step with world trends.

Industry was also suffering a severe squeeze on profits.

"Investment in the resource sector will be maintained at relatively high levels for a time,

as projects previously started or committed are brought to completion," said Mr Fraser.

"But while world economic conditions remain as they are,

we cannot expect to see a return to the sort of substantial new investment decisions of a year or two ago. Investment in manufacturing, which has been at unsatisfactory levels for most of the 1970s, is likely to suffer another setback as a result of the continuing squeeze on profits."

But Mr Fraser stressed that the government would not weaken in its resolve to attack on inflation.

He claimed that the new depreciation package would "significantly enhance the long-term climate for investment in Australia." From today, manufacturing plant will be eligible for either a three or five-year write-off, according to its present depreciable life, while most new plant used by primary producers will be depreciable over three years.

Mining and petroleum companies will have the option to depreciate their plant either under the general depreciation provisions, or under the mining and petroleum provisions in divisions 10 and 10A of the Income Tax Assessment Act.

On industry protection, Mr Fraser said the government's hope for a stronger, more competitive manufacturing sector would not be best served at present, by further reductions in protection, particularly at a time when Australian exporters were facing increasing restrictions on their access to overseas markets.

But the Government remained committed to a winding-back of international trade distortions of all kinds, and would press its views at the Gatt ministerial meeting in Geneva in November.

Vietnamese 'seek peace pact' over Kampuchea

By Kathryn Davies in Singapore

MR NGUYEN CO-THACH, the Vietnamese Foreign Minister, has reportedly told the Singapore Government that China must agree to sign a non-aggression pact with his country before Hanoi can agree to a withdrawal of its troops from Kampuchea.

Following talks between Singapore Foreign Ministry officials and a Vietnamese delegation led by Mr Thach, Mr Sengkhan Dhanasuan, the Singapore Foreign Minister, said that no significant progress had been made towards resolving the differences between Vietnam and ASEAN (Association of South East Asian Nations).

ASEAN does not recognise the pre-Vietnamese Hong Sanmin administration in Phnom Penh and instead backs the "coalition government of Democratic Kampuchea" made up of three factions fighting to oust Vietnam's 180,000 troops from their country.

Mr Thach said in Singapore that Vietnam was making "a significant partial withdrawal" of its forces, including battle troops.



Anthony McDermott reports on Amman's fears for the Gulf's future

Jordan maintains support for Iraq

THE IRANIAN invasion of

Iraq has confirmed many of the worst fears of King Hussein and his Government. A curious indicator of the seriousness with which the King is viewing events occurred recently. He left for a seven-hour meeting in Baghdad with President Saddam Hussein but, exceptionally, he was away from the Kingdom at the same time as his brother and Regent in his absence, Crown Prince Hassan, who was on an official visit to Turkey.

Reflecting the deep concerns of the Government here, Mr Adnan Abu Odeh, Jordan's Information Minister, said that the Iranians are seeking to create in Iraq a Shi'ite state satellite to Iran.

Mr Odeh said the Iranians had pressed into service "Tens of thousands of Iraqi deportees from the Shi'ite sect,"

Jordan has not done badly out of the war. Early on, Iraq handed over 35 captured M-60 tanks. Jordan had already profited from becoming one of the main business centres in the Middle East following the 1973 civil war in Lebanon, but the alliance with Iraq has brought further benefits.

Numerous contracts have been won. The Iraqi government has invested heavily in port expansion. Traffic for the

aims cutting supply links with Kuwait. This underlines how much Jordan, through its commitment to Iraq, has acted as a strategic reserve for Baghdad. The port of Aqaba in the south illustrates this in economic terms. Politically, the risk remains strong that Iraq might turn to Jordan for greater involvement in the war.

As soon as the Iraq-Iran war broke out in the autumn of 1980, Jordan took an initiative rare for a country which normally prefers just to react to events, by pledging its support for Iraq against Iran.

In doing so it aggravated further the already bad relations with its northern neighbour Syria.

A prime motive behind King

Hussein's support for Iraq was his historical sense of the need for Arab unity against outside foes—in this case the Persians.

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Between 1979 and 1981, port traffic has averaged an annual rise of over 18 per cent, reflecting perhaps the effects of port expansion. Traffic for the

first three months of this year

was up by one-third on the same period in 1981.

Imports through Aqaba (and it is reasonable to conclude from opaque official statistics that this means largely re-exports to Iraq) rose by over 90 per cent in 1981, and during the first three months of this year were still up comparatively by over 40 per cent. Were Kuwait to be cut off, and queues of trucks on the Turkish side of the crossing point with Iraq sometimes over 60 miles long, Aqaba will now become an even more important lifeline.

for President Saddam Hussein.

AMERICAN NEWS

Senior State Department officials nominated

By Anatole Kaletsky in Washington

President Ronald Reagan yesterday nominated three senior officials at the State Department to work with Mr George Shultz, the new Secretary of State.

The top appointment, deputy Secretary of State, goes to Mr Kenneth Dam, a longtime associate of Mr Shultz in previous government positions and another academic economist. Mr Dam will replace Mr Walter Stoessel, a career diplomat who has made known his eagerness to retire for some time.

Mr Dam is provost of the University of Chicago, an institution with which Mr Shultz has extensive ties. He previously worked for Mr Shultz in the Nixon administration, first as assistant director of the office of management and budget (OMB) when Mr Shultz was director, and then executive director of the council on economic policy when Mr Shultz was Treasury Secretary.

The two new under-secretaries of state nominated yesterday also have economic backgrounds. Mr William Schneider, who is to be under-secretary for security assistance, science and technology, is associate director of OMB for national security and international affairs.

Mr Allen Wallis, who will be under-secretary for economic affairs, is currently Chancellor of the University of Rochester.

Both these under-secretary posts have been vacant for several months.

The third under-secretary post in the State Department—political affairs—is retained by Mr Lawrence Eagleburger, a career diplomat recently promoted from being assistant secretary for European affairs.

What is notable about the new line-up at the State Department is that Mr Shultz has put experienced administrators with whom he has close personal links into senior posts and resisted any pressures to include "ideologues" from the conservative wing of the Reagan Administration.

Decline in U.S. growth rate feared

BY DAVID LASCELLES IN NEW YORK

HOPES for an early recovery in the U.S. economy seem to be fading.

The U.S. Commerce Department will announce tomorrow the GNP growth rate for the second quarter. Economists expect it to show little change and possibly even a slight fall. The department's original "dash" estimate in June projected a GNP increase of 0.6 per cent.

Coming on the heels of a 3.7 per cent decline in the first quarter, a fall would suggest that overall growth of U.S. GNP this year could be very slight, given the uncertain prospects

for the second half.

The latest statistics have not been encouraging. According to the Federal Reserve Board, industrial production declined 0.7 per cent in June, and the trend in retail sales, capacity utilisation, employment and car sales have all been weak.

"Economic recovery remains tentative," commented Morgan Guaranty Trust in its July "economy watch." It noted that while interest rates have begun to decline, they are unlikely to fall significantly because of strong demand for credit for government spending and private consumption.

The gloom is not universal, of

course. Economists at Citibank, who have been predicting for some time that interest rates would show a steady decline, believe the economy is poised for a summer recovery, provided the Fed allows the money supply to keep pace, and cuts its 12 per cent discount rate.

The bank is counting on the effect of the tax cut and a growth in investment.

Yesterday's cut in the prime rate from 16.5 per cent to 16 per cent was encouraging. But the move looked tentative, and some analysts fear the rate could go back up again if demand for credit picks up too quickly.

Argentina increases prices in state sector

By Our Correspondent in Buenos Aires

ARGENTINA'S government has announced big price rises from public sector corporations which threaten to undermine the benefits of wage increases given to state workers at the beginning of this month.

The higher charges imposed over the weekend, include 20 per cent for electricity and gas for private consumers and 30 per cent for industrial consumers, 25 per cent on public transport and up to 30 per cent on telephone charges.

Water and sewer rates went up by 20 per cent and postal charges by 26 per cent.

President Reynaldo Bigonzo, the retired general installed in office by the army on July 1, conceded over the weekend that the price rises were worrying but had been expected. He is overseeing a major shift in economic policy away from the monetarism of the six years since the 1976 military coup towards a re-activation of the economy.

Economists here say the inflationary measures already adopted by Dr Jose Maria Dagnino Pastor, the new Economy Minister, cannot help but be inflationary. They have included pay rises ranging from 20 to 31 per cent and back dated to July 1.

There is an open recognition among the military regime's political opponents that the measures needed to boost jobs will also push up prices.

Argentina's second largest political party, the Union Civil Radicals, told its plenary committee meeting on Sunday, that the inflationary outlook was bad. During the next few weeks, the economy would have to support a major inflationary impact," said a later statement.

However, the party avoided outright criticism of the economic policies of the government. In contrast, the smaller Movement for Integration and Development, which also issued a statement over the weekend, accusing the government of intending to change for Bolivian natural gas.

Bolivia has not yet come to an agreement with the International Monetary Fund on its financial future though the Torrello Government decreed a strict austerity programme in February.

Exports are lagging behind last year's total and are expected this year to be less than two-thirds of last year's figure.

Venezuela's oil monopoly lowers its sales target

BY KIM FUAD IN CARACAS

JUST SIX MONTHS ago, Petróleos de Venezuela (PDVSA), Latin America's largest corporation, was celebrating record annual sales of \$19.6bn (£12.3bn) and predicting an even better year in 1982.

Then, the bottom fell out of the market for the Venezuelan state oil monopoly, with prices and exports falling dramatically.

Most observers feel that even if PDVSA's investment fund is untouched, the oil industry will not be able to replenish funds needed to cover investment plans due to prevailing world oil market conditions.

They believe that PDVSA, despite its claims it will not do so, is likely to seek additional funding in international capital markets in the near future.

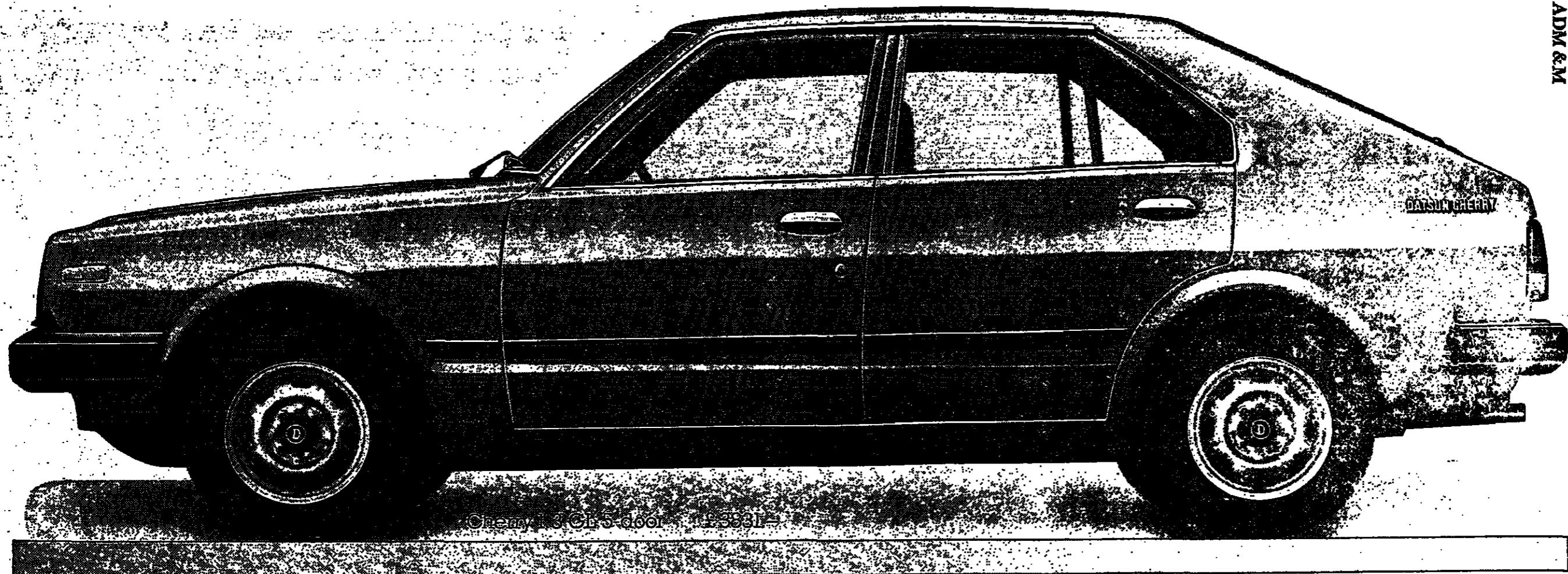
Foreign borrowing by PDVSA would further increase Venezuela's foreign debt, which was estimated at \$19.1bn at the beginning of the year. While most bankers would be happy to do business with the state oil industry, foreign debt has become a major political issue in Venezuela.

Meanwhile, PDVSA has been forced to trim operating expenditures by 10 per cent and "re-dimension" major projects, such as the development of the Orinoco oil belt, with its one trillion barrels of heavy oil.

Further, there is growing concern that the central government, which has also been hit by the decline in oil revenues, which can be covered by existing infrastructure.

COMPARATIVE FIGURES FOR 1982

	Original	Revised
Production	2.7*	1.7*
Exports	1.7*	1.4*
Average export price	30.41	27.16
Export income	19.7bn	14.9bn
Government oil income	13.3bn	2.9bn
PDVSA costs	3.2bn	2.6bn
PDVSA investments	3.6bn	3.4bn



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*Based on 1981 production figures.

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WORLD TRADE NEWS

India approves telephone deal with CIT Alcatel

BY K. K. SHARMA IN NEW DELHI

THE INDIAN cabinet has approved the controversial \$200m (£117m) deal with CIT Alcatel of France, on setting up an electronic telephone exchange factory in India. The contract is expected to be signed soon.

Nine other bidders are understood to have protested strongly against the award of the contract to CIT Alcatel, claiming that their offers were not examined before a letter of intent was given to the French company in mid-May. Among the bidders were British Telecom, which offered System X, Nippon of Japan, and Ericsson of Norway.

The bids by the 10 com-

panies, including CIT Alcatel, were made in response to a global tender floated by the Indian Government as part of a major scheme to modernise the country's obsolete telephone system.

After the bids were received in March, it was announced that the offers would take at least six months to be evaluated.

Protests by the other nine bidders have been rejected by the Indian Government which says that their offers are still valid since they are to be considered for another electronic telephone exchange factory to be set up.

The Government contends that all it has done is award the contract for the second factory before that for the first factory.

CIT Alcatel won the contract because of the French Government's offer of low-interest export credits for nearly half the cost of the factory. The remaining amount is expected to be raised in Eurocurrency loans.

The French company is to set up a factory to make 500,000 lines as well as to expand the capacity of an existing factory in Kerala state from 10,000 lines to 150,000 lines. The other factory, for which the bids are still to be evaluated, will be of another 500,000-line capacity.

The first order was signed last week by AEG with Panavia, the joint venture of Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm, British Aerospace and Aerialia which are responsible for building the Anglo-German-Italian fighter aircraft.

The first contract was ordered 300 Tornado aircraft. The order comes as a significant boost for AEG, which is in the final stage of negotiating new temporary liquidity help from its consortium of West German banks.

Construction and other local costs for the mine will be met through Eurocurrency loans raised by Lazard Brothers, the British merchant bankers.

British Mining Consultants, the consultancy wing of the National Coal Board, has long-established links with the Indian mining industry and has played a key role in the introduction of longwall mining techniques and modern open-cast mining equipment in India.

The 1,000 MW "super" thermal power station at Rihand, which the new coal mine will supply, is to be built by a consortium led by Northern Engineering Industries (NEI) of Britain under an agreement signed following the visit of the British Prime Minister, Sir Denis Healey, to India in March.

NEI has undertaken to drill at least three wells in the 13,500 square kilometre offshore block and has the option to continue operations for another two years after the initial three-year phase.

NEI is to seek the Government's consent soon for a 25 per cent share in the project for each of the two companies which are expected to put up part of the finances and offer technical help.

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The Indian Government is to soon seek a second round of bids for exploratory drilling in the continental shelf.

By Our New Delhi Correspondent

CHEVRON International of California, which has been awarded the first contract to do exploratory drilling for oil in India's continental shelf, is to enter into a partnership agreement with two other companies for the work.

The two are Ocean Drilling and Exploration Company of the U.S. and Hispanoil, the Spanish state-owned company. Chevron has undertaken to invest \$28m (£16.4m) in the first three years of drilling operation in what has been named Saurashtra Offshore Block 11 in the western continental shelf.

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The Indian Government is to soon seek a second round of bids for exploratory drilling in the continental shelf.

Chevron given continental shelf contract

By Our New Delhi Correspondent

BRITISH mining consultants have been awarded a \$20m contract for developing a coal mine at Amokotli which is linked to a 330m "super" thermal power station at Rihand in Uttar Pradesh state, also to be built by a British consortium.

The British Government will provide \$30m aid to finance purchase of the equipment for the coal mine, the remaining costs being covered by British Government-guaranteed export credits.

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British consultants in £60m mine project

BY OUR NEW DELHI CORRESPONDENT

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The British Government will provide \$30m aid to finance purchase of the equipment for the coal mine, the remaining costs being covered by British Government-guaranteed export credits.

Construction and other local costs for the mine will be met through Eurocurrency loans raised by Lazard Brothers, the British merchant bankers.

British Mining Consultants, the consultancy wing of the National Coal Board, has long-established links with the Indian mining industry and has played a key role in the introduction of longwall mining techniques and modern open-cast mining equipment in India.

The 1,000 MW "super" thermal power station at Rihand, which the new coal mine will supply, is to be built by a consortium led by Northern Engineering Industries (NEI) of Britain under an agreement signed following the visit of the British Prime Minister, Sir Denis Healey, to India in March.

NEI has undertaken to drill at least three wells in the 13,500 square kilometre offshore block and has the option to continue operations for another two years after the initial three-year phase.

The Indian Government is to soon seek a second round of bids for exploratory drilling in the continental shelf.

AEG-led group set for Tornado radar sale

By Kevin Done in Frankfurt

A GROUP of six West European electrical and electronics groups, under the leadership of AEG-Telefunken of West Germany as general contractor, are set to win orders totalling DM 800m (£168m) for radar equipment for the Tornado multi-role combat aircraft.

When the Economic Affairs Ministry decided earlier this year to underline its displeasure over massive and continuing annual trade deficits with Japan, it banned over 1,500 consumer items — including televisions, appliances, and fast-selling video-tape recorders — from entering Taiwan. Naturally enough, some Taiwanese entrepreneurs sensed a chance for profits and sought ways round the ban.

The first order was signed last week by AEG with Panavia, the joint venture of Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm, British Aerospace and Aerialia which are responsible for building the Anglo-German-Italian fighter aircraft.

The first contract was worth DM 85m. In total Panavia is planning to buy 500 navigation and terrain-tracking radar sets for delivery up to 1988. The West German forces have ordered 300 Tornado aircraft.

The biggest share of the work has been won by AEG which expects to book 34 per cent of the total contract with Siemens taking 11 per cent. The British groups involved are Marconi and Ferranti along with Fiat and Elettronica from Italy.

The order comes as a significant boost for AEG, which is in the final stage of negotiating new temporary liquidity help from its consortium of West German banks.

The British financial package arranged for the Orissa project is still partly open, and Davy McKee and Lazard, which organised the Eurocurrency loans for it, have indicated their interest.

German TVs for Malta

GRUNDIG, the German TV manufacturing concern, has been chosen by Malta as partner in a TV assembly venture which is scheduled to come on stream in the next two months. Godfrey Grima writes from Malta. The company, Magra Vision, will build close to 12,000 colour TV sets a year for the local and export markets.

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UK NEWS

Britain 'should take lead on EEC energy policy'

BY RAY DAFTER, ENERGY EDITOR

THE Government is today urged to take the lead in pressing for a more effective energy policy within the European Community.

A paper published by several leading research institutes argues that the UK should support a five-year Community fund to finance projects which may not be justified on strict commercial grounds.

These projects could be on a relatively small scale, such as demonstration plants for new technologies or major schemes, such as gas pipeline networks which could be to the benefit of Europe as a whole rather than just a single member country.

The author, Dr Nigel Lucas, a lecturer in the mechanical engineering department of Imperial College, London, suggests that money for the fund could be raised through the imposition of a 1 per cent tax on imported oil.

Dr Lucas, pointing out that the UK is a net exporter of oil, writes: "At the most mercenary level, if the UK takes the initiative on a European energy policy she could hope to finance the cost in such a way that she paid less than the others and took more out."

"The main difference between the UK and the other member states of the Com-

munity is not that she stands to gain more than others from a European energy policy but that she has a better chance of bringing it about if she were to take an initiative."

The UK was well placed to take the initiative because of her special status as a major oil, coal and natural gas producer.

As part of a common policy, writes Dr Lucas, the UK should adopt a "more extrovert" attitude to her gas reserves. A pipeline link should be built between the North Sea, Britain and the continental gas transmission system. This would help the movement of gas from Norwegian waters of the North Sea.

Such a network, which might be partly financed by a Community fund, would add to the overall security of gas supplies in Europe. Properly designed, it should also reduce the overall costs of developing North Sea gas.

Energy, the UK and the European Community, by Nigel Lucas. Energy Paper No. 5: £4.50. UK Interests and the International Energy Agency by Louis Turner. Energy Paper No. 4: £4.50. Both published by the Policies Studies Institute, 1/2 Castle Lane, London SW1E 8DR.

House prices static

By Andrew Taylor

HOUSE PRICES continue to show no signs of any significant increase despite the rising activity in the housing market, says the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors in its latest monthly survey of house prices, published today.

Seventy per cent of the 202 estate agents replying to last month's survey said that prices had remained static in the three months ending in June. This was a slightly higher proportion than the 65 per cent of the previous month.

The institution said nearly 27 per cent of agents had reported small price increases in June compared with a third in the May quarter.

The return of Labour in 1979

revived the project. But changes in the economics of conferences in the interim meant an increase in its size, no doubt to the chagrin of the Tories, and its final cost was £12m. Around £5m had been spent on the theatre.

Mr John Thomas, the institution's housing spokesman, said that reports on price movements differed greatly from region to region but that higher prices recorded in some areas and for different types of dwelling pointed to "an annual increase of no more than 3 per cent."

"Contrary to some reports, the latest RICS survey reveals virtually no change in the rate of increase in house prices in the last quarter compared with the quarters ending in April and May," said Mr Thomas.

Nottingham opens conference hall

The Royal Centre could prove to be a big asset. Lorne Barling writes

ing for up to 40 per cent of the time already confirmed for next year, prospects are considered fairly good.

But he is well aware that with a number of new conference centres in Britain, such as one being built at Bournemouth, Cardiff's, which will open in October, and the Barbican Centre in London, which opened this spring, the competition will be tough.

Nottingham has been invited to discuss joining the "big five" conference centres—the National Exhibition Centre in Birmingham, Harrogate, Wembley, the Barbican and Brighton—in the British Conference and Exhibition Centre Export Council.

This body markets all these centres abroad and could be helpful to Nottingham in attracting foreign business. But Mr Anderson believes the city may go it alone.

"I am waiting to hear what they can do for us," he says, and adds that the Royal Centre is doing its own promotion in Brussels in October.

Confidence such as this stems partly from the generally acclaimed design of the hall, which includes a 35-tonne acoustic canopy which hangs on steel hawsers above the stage.

He estimates it will need to be in use four days a week to break even, and with bookings

lowered, according to the acoustic responses required, to suit the size and nature of the event in progress. The natural reverberation of the hall will suit serious music, while sound absorption "banners" can be lowered for conferences or rock concerts.

An essential requirement of the hall's design was flexibility, since conferences alone could not ensure adequate use, and rock concerts are expected to play a considerable role in making it profitable.

Serious music enthusiasts will also welcome the opening, since a number of the better orchestras had recently given notice that they would no longer visit the city because of poor conditions at the only other available hall.

The programme for the first month, which remains confidential at present, is expected to include a wide range of events—mainly entertainment aimed at testing the flexibility of the hall. There are known to be plans for televised sports events such as squash and darts.

The aim is to attract more events overall, not merely divert them from other local venues.

High standards are being aimed at in terms of comfort for delegates and audiences.



A 200-bedroom hotel, a private venture, is being constructed near the hall, with direct access over a covered bridge. It will also have a 700-space car park, a health club, and continental restaurants.

However, Mr Anderson is aware that the hall is opening at a time of very hard competition for conference business. The number of UK conferences has been seriously affected by the recession, as have the numbers of people attending them.

Nottingham is therefore going out of its way to do what it regards as something special, and nothing would please its backers more than the ability to show the Nottingham Conservative that they do not have a monopoly on successful enterprise.

APPOINTMENTS

Board changes made at Belize Sugar Industries

Changes to the board of BELIZE SUGAR INDUSTRIES have been made by the Tate and Lyle Group. Mr J. C. W. Mitchell, managing director, North American division, has been appointed chairman of BSL. Mr R. A. Shirliff, finance director, United Molasses, has been appointed a director of BSL. Mr D. A. Tate leaves the board of BSL and has become managing director of The Zambia Sugar Company. He was also formerly vice chairman of Tate and Lyle Inc in Miami, US.

Mr Archie Dalton, who joined FRIGOSCANIA last year, has been appointed to the board as commercial director.

Following the resignation of managing director, Mr Peter Harding, at BERRIOWS GROUP OF REGIONAL NEWSPAPERS, Mr Roger Rix and Mr Michael Woods, are appointed managing directors of a restructured management organisation. Mr Rix is to head the new northern group based on Worcester and includes all the newspapers located in the West and Southwest Midlands. He was previously deputy general manager of Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers at Portsmouth, and production director of The Guardian. He takes up the post in early autumn. Mr Woods becomes managing director of the southern group based on Taunton and includes all newspapers in Somerset, Devon and Wiltshire. He was previously marketing director of Berrisow's Newspapers following editor of The Evening News, Worcester. He starts in Taunton in August.

Mr Tom Martin Jar, joint managing director, ARCO, has been appointed chairman of the Arco Group.

GREATER LONDON COUNCIL'S first equal opportunities adviser is to be Ms Judith Hunt, a national trade union official with experience in equal opportunities work and women's employment problems. She will be responsible for helping to implement and promote the GLC's new equal opportunities programme for both existing and potential employees and will advise particularly on women's career prospects with the Council.

Mr E. Lawrence-Corrie has resigned as managing director of The Continental Assurance Company of London, and from his directorships of other companies in the INA-UK HOLDINGS GROUP. Mr A. W. Frost and Mr W. H. Howie, directors of INA UK HOLDINGS, have been appointed directors of The Con-

tinental Assurance Company of London, with Mr Frost as acting chief executive.

Mr K. R. Mackenzie has felt obliged for health reasons to resign from the chairmanship of the board of HIGSONS BREWERY. He will continue to serve as a director. Mr G. L. Corlett has been appointed chairman and will continue to act as managing director.

Mr Tom King, a director of THURGAR BALE, has been appointed a director of its parent company, THURGAR BARDEX.

SMITH ST. AUBYN & CO. has made Mr Adrian Ferri a director of the company with effect from August 1982.

Mr Peter Coachman has been appointed financial director of HOGG ROBINSON OVERSEAS part of the Hogg Robinson Group.

The following appointments have been made in REVERTEX and Revertex Sales. Both companies are members of the Yule Catto Group. At Revertex: Mr Philip D. Gadian becomes managing director, Mr Peter T. Major, director, and Mr Michael W. Lawrence, director. At Revertex Sales: Mr Philip D. Gadian becomes chairman and Mr John R. Goddard a director.

Principal members of the newly formed subsidiary of the Cates Allen Group, CATER ALLEN FUTURES are: Mr A. J. McCutcheon, chairman; Mr A. P. La Roche, managing director; Mr J. C. Barclay, director; Mr P. A. Allocia, director; Mr J. A. Pound, director and Mr L. T. Liss, senior futures broker.

NACANCO, UK subsidiary of the National Can Corp of Chicago, has appointed Mr W. Peter Long as sales and marketing director.

Mr Douglas McPhail, a director of the British Linen Bank, has joined the board of JAMES FLEMING AND CO. NEWBRIDGE, as a non-executive director.

Mr David C. McCutcheon has joined the international corporate finance department of SALOMON BROTHERS INTERNATIONAL in London. Mr McCutcheon, formerly an executive director at Credit Suisse First Boston, and a Canadian national, will be concentrating on North American new business with emphasis on Canada.

Mr R. T. S. Macpherson has been appointed a director of THE SCOTTISH MUTUAL ASSURANCE SOCIETY.

CONTRACTS

£14m Brazilian order for Davy-Loewy

A CONTRACT worth about £14m has been won by DAVY-LOEWY, Sheffield, for Aco Minas Gerais S.A. (ACOMINAS), of Belo Horizonte, Brazil. It includes the supply of steel rolling mill plant and civil co-ordination, and is for an extension to the bloom and billet mill scheme at present under construction at Ouro Branco. The new equipment includes billet mill stands, shear, turnover cooling bank as well as modifications to existing equipment. It will enable ACOMINAS to produce longer billets and a wider range of sizes. The mill is planned to start production late 1983.

A BILSTON (WIRRAL) LTD, CES SITE WELDING (BIRMINGHAM), has won orders worth over £1m for various on-site contract engineering projects. The contracts in-



clude the welding and dressing work for the largest fractionating column ever built in Europe, for Esso Chemical at Moissac, France. CES Site Welding is a subsidiary of CA Moon (Holdings).

MSJ INTERNATIONAL TRADING has been awarded a £613,000 contract for the establishment in Nigeria of a Central Pathology Laboratory, with teaching facilities for 100 students.

A FURTHER ORDER from Iraq for railway trackwork has been placed by the consortium of THOS. W. WARD (RAILWAY ENGINEERS), Nottingham, and RAILWAY MINE AND PLANTATION EQUIPMENT, London. Valued at £1m the order follows a £5m order won by the partnership, also from Iraq, for similar railway trackwork and supplies.

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With labour charges escalating, developments

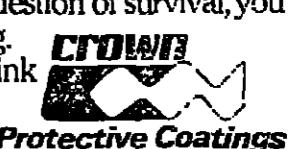
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Leasing of equipment up against economic trend

By James McDonald

LEASING OF plant and equipment is continuing to expand against the economic trend, says Mr Leslie Christmas, chairman of the Equipment Leasing Association, in the 1981 report which will be presented today to its annual meeting in London.

The 58 member companies of the association account for more than 80 per cent of all finance leasing transacted in the UK, and Mr Christmas reports that in the first quarter of the year the level of leasing contracts entered into with new and existing customers was substantially higher than in the same period last year.

"There are indications that this improvement has at least been maintained in the second quarter," says Mr Christmas.

He reveals that by the end of June the cost of leased equipment on the books of member companies had reached £10bn—a rise of 12 per cent compared with the total at the end of last year, and 31 per cent more than a year before.

Mr Christmas says he cannot tell if the good start to the current year will necessarily be reflected in new business completed during the rest of the year. "I am, however, confident of our members' ability to perform well, if not better, in an improved economic climate as they have during the difficult conditions of the last year."

The association's latest quarterly survey shows member companies are more optimistic about trends in the economy than they were in the second half of last year "though evidence of a real upturn in economic activity is slow to accumulate."

The annual report shows that last year member companies of the association leased a record of almost £2.7m worth of new plant and equipment to industrial and commercial customers.

In the UK, over 11 per cent of all new capital investment is financed by leasing. "And, at a time when the problems of recession and unemployment are certainly not confined to this country, it is encouraging that Britain accounts for a third of the total European leasing market," says Mr Christmas.

He reports that, overall, association members last year saw new business rise by 12.5 per cent although this concealed the first, small, drop since 1972 in the value of equipment leased to users in the UK. "International business written in the UK rose quite sharply from under £200m to over £370m."

"Leasing by our members to the manufacturing industries was up by 11 per cent. In fact, 20 per cent of all investment in this vital sector of the economy is now financed by leasing."

The 1982 Finance Bill contains clauses which effectively stop the export of capital allowances. "We are not happy, because these new measures also withhold allowances from leases that finance the export of equipment made in the UK," Mr Christmas says.

Early sales boost June consumer spending

By ROBIN PAULEY AND DAVID CHURCHILL

SPENDING in Britain's high street shops increased in June—but the figures probably reflect a tendency by hard-pressed retailers to start their sales early this year, rather than a boom in consumer spending.

Figures published yesterday by the Department of Trade show that the volume of retail trade rose 1.1 per cent, seasonally adjusted, in June after remaining at the low April level in May. The index is now provisionally 107 (1978=100)—the same as in March and January.

Although the figures offer some

encouragement to retailers who have had a depressed first half for the last three years, they still represent only a 1.6 per cent volume increase over June last year.

Apart from early summer sales there has been an improvement in the footwear and clothing industries, which had a flat first quarter.

Trade in the second quarter was slightly down on the first, with the index showing an average of 106.3 and 106.6 respectively. These are both higher than the figures for the last three quarters of last year.

The first quarter 1981 figure was also 106.5.

The value of retail sales in June, not seasonally adjusted, was 7 per cent higher than in June last year. In the first half of the year the average value of sales was 8 per cent up on the first half of last year.

The Retail Consortium, which represents the bulk of retail trade, said yesterday it was "concerned" that retailers were coming under increased pressure from the need to keep prices stable while other costs were rising.

The consortium says that

many retailers have been forced to start their sales promotions earlier than usual to boost trade.

In many cases, the push for volume growth through price cuts has paid off. Rumbecks, the electrical goods chain, reported that sales value was up by 40 per cent during the first few weeks of its sale which started at the end of June.

Mr David Johnson, Rumbecks' chief executive, said prices for many electrical goods were the same or even lower than in the past couple of years.

"The consumer is continuing to recognise that he can get some very good bargains at present in electrical goods," he said.

Video recorders and colour televisions, whose prices are lower than last year, are selling well.

The Argos discount stores chain, which started its sale two weeks earlier this year, reported a 33 per cent increase in sales value, compared with the same month last year. However, after taking account of new store openings, the sales value increase is 20 per cent.

£12m grants announced to stimulate computer investment

By Jason Crisp

THE GOVERNMENT is to spend a further £12m encouraging British companies to use computer-aided design, manufacture and test equipment.

Announcing the scheme yesterday, Mr Kenneth Baker, Industry Minister with special responsibility for information technology, said: "As a result of our awareness activities, many companies now appreciate the benefits computer-aided design techniques can bring in productivity, competitiveness and profitability."

He said that the need to invest in such equipment was urgent. British industry had not only failed to match the investment made by US and Japanese companies, but also that of major European competitors.

"If we do not invest now, our ability to compete successfully will be impaired. The Government is aware that many companies are having to restrict their investment in new capital equipment and the effects of this are particularly significant when techniques new to a particular organisation are under consideration."

The Government has therefore concluded that it should provide in the short term positive encouragement for investment in these areas," Mr Baker said.

Government support will be grants of up to a third of the capital cost of the computer equipment.

BCal wins handling deal on NZ flights

BRITISH Caledonian Airways, the leading UK independent airline, has won a contract to handle Air New Zealand's operations at Gatwick Airport when the New Zealand airline starts flights between Britain and Auckland on August 26.

Air New Zealand will fly the route twice weekly via Los Angeles and Tahiti using Boeing 747 Jumbo jets.

BCal will provide cargo and ramp handling, maintenance, airside handling, flight despatch, aircraft cleaning and other services at Gatwick. It will also handle cargo for the airline at Heathrow.

Valuation services to be reviewed

THE Chancellor of the Exchequer has set up a committee under the chairmanship of Mr A. H. Dalton to review the provision of valuation services in government.

Its terms of reference are "to examine the functions other than rating valuation, of valuers now employed by the Valuation Offices of the Inland Revenue and by other government departments, having regard to the needs of government departments, local authorities, the general public and other bodies, for valuations and advice; and to recommend how these needs can best be met in an efficient and cost-effective manner."

Price cuts increase Tesco market share

THE new price cutting campaign launched by Tesco in mid-May has achieved its immediate aim of an increase in market share, according to figures circulating among the grocery trade.

Statistics for the packaged grocery market show that for the four weeks ending June 19 Tesco's market share was 13.9 per cent compared with 13 per cent in the previous four weeks.

Government set to act on video piracy

By Jason Crisp

THE GOVERNMENT looks likely to make a significant switch in its policy on video piracy. Mr Iain Spratt, Under Secretary for Trade, told the Commons yesterday that the Government is now considering a levy on blank tapes.

Just over a year ago when the Government published a green paper on copyright law it firmly rejected industry calls for a levy on blank tapes and recorders for both video and audio equipment.

At the time the Government said the levy would be inflationary—it could double the cost of a blank tape—and unenforceable, as people would buy tapes from abroad by mail order.

Film and record companies have campaigned vigorously for the Government to take a tough line on illegal recording on both audio and video tapes.

Earlier this year, the British Videogram Association said 78 per cent of the 6.7m pre-recorded video tapes sold in the UK last year were illegal copies.

Mr Spratt said yesterday that the record industry was losing over £500m through people taping records at home. "A levy on all of the matters put to us, and the Government is considering it," he said.

Mr Spratt told the Commons that the Government wanted to act as soon as possible on video and record piracy.

Business births and deaths

By Lisa Wood

FOR EVERY 100 companies that went out of business last year 115 started to trade, Mr John MacGregor, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Industry, said yesterday.

Mr MacGregor was announcing the first results of a Department of Industry analysis of VAT registrations ("births") and de-registrations ("deaths") for 1981.

Speaking at the opening of a workshop extension in London, Mr MacGregor said there were 14,800 more births than deaths of companies in the UK in 1981.

According to the DoI figures, 124,800 companies registered for VAT in 1981 and 110,000 de-registered.

However, not all new VAT registrations are new businesses and not all new businesses are registered for VAT.

Ship insurance premiums to rise sharply

By JOHN MOORE, CITY CORRESPONDENT

SHIPOWNERS face a sharp rise in insurance premiums following the renewed outbreak of hostilities between Iran and Iraq. Representatives of Lloyd's insurance underwriters and London insurance companies are expected to meet today to consider increasing already high insurance rates on ships' cargoes.

In the past few days shipowners have been charged between 1 per cent and 3 per cent

of the hull value of their vessels in additional premiums if they are sailing to Kharg Island or the Iranian port of Bandar Khomeini.

With the additional premiums running for seven-day voyages, the extra charge can mean for shipowners the equivalent of a payment representing more than one and a half times the value of the ship on an annual basis.

This compares with a standard premium rates on ships travel-

ling to non-war regions of 0.0275 per cent in additional payments.

But that is likely to change today.

Underwriters have already relaxed insurance rates on ships sailing to the Argentine area following the end of the Falklands hostilities.

While rates for the Iran-Iraq areas are rising sharply, underwriters are reporting that there have been few inquiries from shipowners who might be considering voyages to the area.

Extension to opera house is opened

By David Churchill

THE £9.75m extension to the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden was yesterday officially opened by Prince Charles.

The extension has been paid for partly by government grants but mainly from money raised by appeals to commercial and industrial sponsors.

The appeal fund remains some £200,000 short, although the opera house is confident the amount will soon be raised.

The extension includes a large opera rehearsal studio, two ballet studios, modern dressing rooms and improved wardrobe and storage areas.

The fact that the new dressing rooms will be used exclusively by the opera singers has created some antagonism among members of the ballet company who will continue to use the existing poor facilities.

To counter this criticism the opera house administrator is upgrading the old dressing room accommodation over the next few months.

A decision on when to go ahead with the next phase of the extension programme is likely to be taken shortly. The present proposal is for an ambitious further extension of the Covent Garden site, which is likely to cost up to £30m.

Work on this further extension is scheduled to start in 1986 and would mean that the opera house would be shut down for three years.

The opera and ballet companies would probably transfer to the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, during this period.

Kessock bridge cuts route to N. Scotland

By MARK MEREDITH, SCOTTISH CORRESPONDENT

THE KESSOCK BRIDGE over the Beauly Firth at Inverness was partially opened to traffic yesterday providing a shorter route on a major road to the North of Scotland.

The bridge forms part of long-range road improvements to the A9 route north from Perth through Inverness, considered vital for economic development in the Highlands.

The 1,052-metre structure spans the Beauly Firth from the outskirts of Inverness. It crosses to the Black Isle—a peninsula between the Beauly and Moray Firths to the south and the Cromarty Firth to the north. A causeway already crosses the Cromarty Firth, taking traffic north into eastern Ross.

The bridge re-routes the A9 which has up to now passed through Inverness and then taken a circuitous route around the western ends of the Beauly and Cromarty Firths.

The structure, suspended from two uprights, looks similar to the Rees Bridge over the Rhine at Düsseldorf.

It has special hydraulic buffers to withstand the shock of possible earthquakes, as the bridge crosses

the Great Glen fault. The bridge has also been built to stand up to collision with small ships passing through the improved road system. Whatever the relief in terms of traffic noise, hotel and shop owners are anxious about the loss of business, especially tourist trade.

The opening will bring a sudden rush to the towns of Beauly and Dingwall, at the western ends of the two Firths spanned by the improved road system. Whatever the relief in terms of traffic noise, hotel and shop owners are anxious about the loss of business, especially tourist trade.

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UK NEWS - LABOUR

Fire officers sack senior official

BY PHILIP BASSETT, LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

LEADERS OF the National Association of Fire Officers have dismissed the union's general secretary following the unfavourable outcome for the union of an internal dispute with the Fire Brigades Union.

The dispute, over the representation of Britain's 5,000 fire officers, has been resolved largely in the FBU's favour under proposals sent to the two unions yesterday.

Firemen win union battle

BY PHILIP BASSETT, LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

BRITAIN'S 33,000 full-time firemen have won an inter-union battle in the fire service about the representation of fire officers, over which the Fire Brigades Union threatened industrial action earlier this year and possible national strikes.

The executive of the FBU voted to suspend its threatened industrial action over the representation of Britain's 5,000 fire officers when the fire employers offered to mount a headcount of the officers to determine their union membership.

New proposals on the negotiating structure for fire officers were sent yesterday to the FBU and to the National Association of Fire Officers, based on the results of the headcount.

Nafo refused to co-operate with the headcount, so the employers were able only to

There have been indications that the non-TUC affiliated Nafo is dissatisfied with its general secretary, Mr Peter Worger, over the union's handling of the dispute. Nafo claims about 4,000 members in all.

These signs came to a head last week at a meeting of the union's governing executive committee, at which a motion of "no confidence" in Mr. Worger was approved unanimously.

Details of the executive meeting, and the reasons behind its decision, are now being sent out to union branches. The union is keen to present the issue as amicable, and to try to show that Mr. Worger's leaving was mutually agreed.

between the unions, giving them each five seats.

This suggestion meets the terms of the FBU's original claim, and so could be regarded as a victory for the union.

A meeting between the three sides seems likely in the next fortnight. If Nafo fails to respond to the employers' side proposals, the FBU is likely to apply pressure on the employers to negotiate an agreement with it bringing in the new representation formula.

The officers' committee would cover all ranks from sections officer to senior divisional officer. The other part of the employers' proposal would give the FBU sole negotiating rights for grades up to station officer.

Under the old system, the FBU had 22 seats on this committee and Nafo 10.

Aslef members speak out against flexible rostering, David Goodhart reports

Mood of bitterness as train drivers return

THERE WAS a feeling of suppressed glee in the main British Rail operations room at 8.30 yesterday morning.

The atmosphere was rather different across the road at the BR Marylebone depot where a dozen Aslef drivers faced their first day's work with the new flexible rosters.

As Mr James Urquhart, BR operations manager, was waxing lyrical in the ops room to reporters from most parts of the globe, the demoralised drivers were licking their wounds and looking for scapegoats.

The absence of new speed

regulations at Marylebone meant that no trains moved at all yesterday morning — an appropriate christening for the new rosters, according to 28-year-old driver Bob Winkworth.

He was one of a number of drivers I met yesterday who was so embittered by the strike experience that he was spending all his spare time looking for another job.

"You know what you can do with your flexi-rosters — there's no way I'm going to work for an employer like BR," he said. "The older men especially — bred on the 'railway family' ideal — was still wriggling under the

shock of BR's sacking threat. Mr Jack Bowden, divisional committee secretary at Waterloo, said three of his members had already resigned since the back to work call.

In the canteen at London Bridge depot, where the customary length of service calculations totted up 300 years, drivers with over 40 years' experience were saying that morale had never been lower.

"It will take a generation for the business to be eradicated," said a frequent comment.

But nobody I spoke to had one word of criticism for Mr Ray Buckton or the Aslef executive. "They did a good job in impossible circumstances," was the typical view.

Back at the ops room yesterday morning Mr Urquhart said: "Something quite tremendous has happened, but we are still conscious of the problems ahead and we must go back to work together without recriminations."

Motives for dissatisfaction from the TUC have already been passed by Waterloo and Shefield branches, and by a meeting of 15 South London branches at Croydon on Sunday.

It can be expected before the next Aslef conference meets.

There is little doubt that the executive's recommendation of

the new rosters will be reluctantly accepted by the conference in the same disciplined way that the return to work call was obeyed.

One dissenter was Mr John Davies, branch secretary in Hereford, who said the conference might throw out the recommendation. "We stand to be wiped out at Hereford if it is accepted," he said.

But nobody I spoke to had one word of criticism for Mr Ray Buckton or the Aslef executive. "They did a good job in impossible circumstances," was the typical view.

Back at the ops room yesterday morning Mr Urquhart said: "Something quite tremendous has happened, but we are still conscious of the problems ahead and we must go back to work together without recriminations."

"Fat chance of that," said a King's Cross driver when I reported the comment. But, at the clocking-on point at King's Cross depot yesterday there was almost a first-day-back-at-school atmosphere.

I walked into work with 20-year-old Mr Mark Smith, who broke the strike and worked last week. He was

spreading the strike to other Sealink ports.

The decision to persist with the action comes after seven months of talks between the British Rail subsidiary and local officials of the National Union of Seafarers. These culminated last week in three days of intensive discussions at the port involving the union's national officers and senior Sealink management.

But at the weekend Mr Alan Petre, chairman of the union's local dispute committee, said

"The decision to persist with the action comes after seven months of talks between the British Rail subsidiary and local officials of the National Union of Seafarers. These culminated last week in three days of intensive discussions at the port involving the union's national officers and senior Sealink management.

"For years we have negotiated agreements and now they're ripped them up," he said. "We will be telling our colleagues not to take action for us but for themselves."

Sealink said last night it was "very disappointed" with the vote. It declined to say what action would now be taken until the union confirmed at national level that the strike has official backing.

to 12 hours still in the pipeline. "These are not the real rosters — make no mistake about that," is a common suspicion.

It was a suspicion which Mr Charles Wort, BR area manager at King's Cross did nothing to allay. "I couldn't tell you what future rosters will look like but obviously we need the best productivity we can get," he said. He was still waiting to know when the initial seven to nine-hour shifts would be introduced in his area but he was certain of some pretty tough bargaining over the details at the Local Divisional Committee.

The rosters are normally worked out at local level between union and management officials but BR's tactic of bypassing the union during the dispute and posting the new rosters to each driver will create a lot more wrangling than usual.

But Mr Wort also pointed out that of the 318 new rosters at King's Cross, scheduled to replace the previous 394, only 36 will be a little over eight hours.

A driver at London Bridge said: "I've been a Tony all my life, but no longer after this.

Ships occupied by the 570 seamen involved in the dispute are the St George, a 7,000 tonne passenger and car ferry; the Speedlink Vanguard rail freight ship; and two Sea Freightliner container vessels.

Two passenger ferries that have been withdrawn from service, the Cambridge and the Essex, have also been taken over by ratings.

Manpower commission may scrap community enterprise scheme

BY JOHN LLOYD, LABOUR EDITOR

THE MANPOWER Services Commission will consider proposals to scrap the Community Enterprise Programme at the meeting of its commissioners next week — in spite of the programme's popularity among its clients and those who run it.

The commissioners are likely to approve a proposal which would merge the CEP with a new scheme, first announced by Sir Geoffrey Howe, the Chancellor, earlier this year, to provide community employment for the long-term unemployed at a cost of £135m. The new merged scheme would start on October 1 this year, at the earliest.

The proposal would offer a mixture of part and full-time employment, at an average wage of £60. Those working more than 30 hours could claim family income supplement, while those working less could

claim supplementary benefits. Sponsors of the scheme would receive up to £8,120 for wages, up to £395 for national insurance contributions and up to £440 for administrative and overheads cost, a total maximum of £3,995 per worker.

The MSC will also pay the full wage costs of managers and supervisors on the scheme.

The present CEP pays up to nearly £90 — a wage which has largely avoided charges from the unions that the workers on the scheme were undercutting union rates.

However, the voluntary organisations believe that the new, merged scheme will not work.

A meeting of representatives of the organisations met at the National Council for Voluntary Organisations yesterday, and expressed their opposition to the scheme on three major grounds.

• The scheme contains no

money for training — though it suggests that sponsors could use a proportion of the wage element to fund training.

• The much larger numbers involved in the new scheme favour management by local authorities, thus tending to cut out the voluntary organisations, used to handling no more than 50 workers in present schemes.

• The money paid will often be less than that paid to CEP workers, and will tend to discriminate against the unemployed with dependents, since they can earn more on social security.

Mr Peter Jay, the National Council chairman, will write to Mr David Young, chairman of the MSC, to express the voluntary organisation's concern, and to seek for changes in the new scheme. He will also put the Council's view that consultation with the voluntary sector has been inadequate.

Dock strike to continue

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

SOME 200 Birkenhead dockers yesterday voted by a large majority to continue their two-weeks' long strike. They walked out when the Mersey Docks and Harbour Company ceased cargo handling in one of the docks and tried to transfer the men to Liverpool.

To compensate them for

having to cross the River Mersey, the Transport and General Workers' Union members demanded £1,500 each as a lump sum and a £900-a-year travel and upheaval allowance. The management has only agreed to provide them with a special allowance for one month.

Miss Baker became an active trade unionist six years ago

TUC award

CAROLYN BAKER, 24, of Banknock, Stirlingshire, was yesterday chosen from seven finalists to receive the 1982 TUC award for youth. A prize of her choice and a diploma will be presented to her at September's TUC Conference in Brighton.

Miss Baker became an active trade unionist six years ago

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UK NEWS - PARLIAMENT and POLITICS

Queen's policeman 'was vetted'

THE QUEEN'S Police Officer, Commander Michael Trebilcot, has resigned from the Metropolitan Police after confessing to having a homosexual relationship over a number of years with a male prostitute. Mr William Whitelaw, the Home Secretary, told the Commons yesterday.

Few questions were put to Mr Whitelaw, who promised a fuller statement tomorrow. He said he thought it right to report the matter to the House at the earliest possible opportunity.

Mr George Cunningham (SDP, Islington South): "Are we to assume this information was not known to the security services until now? Does that mean that no positive vetting was carried out on the Commander or that there was positive vetting which failed to reveal these facts?" Mr Whitelaw replied: "He was positively vetted."

Mr Jonathan Aitken (Con, Thanet East): "Will this aspect of security lapses surrounding the Queen be covered by the Deltow report in view of the fact some reports say it is already in the hands of those in authority?"

Mr Whitelaw answered: "All these matters will be covered by my statement on Wednesday, which will include the Deltow report and other matters which come before me."

The Minister's statement came soon after Scotland Yard announced that Commander Trebilcot's resignation on Saturday was for "personal reasons." Aged 50, the Commander was head of the Royal Protection Section.

Mr Roy Hattersley, Shadow Home Secretary, thanked the Home Secretary for reporting the facts to the House at the first opportunity.

Mr Jo Grimond (Lib, Orkney and Shetland), asked: "Can you tell us what the functions of the Queen's Police Officer are and whether these incidents came to light only during these inquiries that were going on or whether it was quite separate from that?"

The Home Secretary replied: "It is separate from that. The Queen's Police Officer's duties are in fact to protect the Queen in matters outside the palace and on all her visits outside."

Mr Patrick McVair-Wilson (Con, New Forest), asked how long Mr Whitelaw had known about the Commander. Mr Whitelaw replied: "Since 9.15 this morning."

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significant modifications, most of them based on customer advice.

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Companies may be ordered to defy U.S. pipeline embargo

BY JOHN HUNT, PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT

A WARNING was given yesterday by Mr Peter Rees, Minister for Trade, that the Government is prepared to take tougher action against the United States over the U.S. embargo on equipment for the Siberian pipeline.

This could include instructing all companies in Britain to defy the restrictions imposed by the U.S.

Already the Government has put into operation Section 1 of the Protection of Industry Act, stating that the action of the U.S. Administration is damaging to British interests.

Mr Rees reinforced this warning yesterday by promising that his department would not hesitate to activate further sections of the Act "depending on how the situation develops."

It is understood that the next step, under Section 2 of the Act, would be to require all British companies to provide complete information about their orders which might be affected by the U.S. embargo.

More important, under Section 3, the Government would instruct all companies operating in the UK and subject to UK law, not to obey President Reagan's order on the pipeline.

This would be particularly important to the John Brown Company, which has an order for 21 turbines for the pipeline. So far six of these have been completed employing a rotor supplied by General Electric of America.

If the Government activated Section 3 of the Act, these six turbines could be shipped to the Soviet Union irrespective of the U.S. edict.

In the Commons, Mr Dennis Canavan (Surreyshire West), said the Prime Minister should bring pressure on President Reagan in order to help John Brown. He said the John Brown order worth over £100m was



Peter Rees: British views made known to U.S.

being put in jeopardy by the U.S. embargo.

Mr Rees said he had already expressed to the U.S. the Government's strong objection to the American restriction. He had emphasised the harm the measure was doing in souring trade relations between the U.S. and countries in the European Community.

"I did stress the very damaging impact these regulations could have on British companies."

Mr Mark Lennox-Boyd (Cons, Morecambe and Lonsdale), asked whether the U.S. had managed to explain its attempt to coerce European states into applying sanctions. He complained that the U.S. action was taken while they themselves were exporting vast amounts of grain to the Soviet Union.

Mr Rees assured him he had pointed out this anomaly to the Americans and had not been "entirely persuaded" by the explanation they had given him.

BA 'manipulation' denied

ACCUSATIONS that the Government is manipulating the accounts of British Airways in an attempt to make the state-owned airline more attractive to would-be buyers were firmly denied yesterday by Mr Iain Sproat, Under Secretary for Trade.

Mr Barry Sheerman (Lab, Huddersfield East) had said there were rumours that behind the scenes Mr Sproat was attempting to "manipulate and massage" the accounts to make the airline more saleable. Such action would only make the airline weak, whether it was publicly or privately owned, he said.

To Labour jeers, Mr Sproat said selling off the airline offered the chance of getting it "off the backs" of taxpayers.

"It is our firm expectation that British Airways will be placed into private sector hands next year—to the gratification of British Airways, its employees and passengers."

Mr John Smith, shadow Trade Secretary, attacked the decision to axe a further 7,000 airline jobs.

Mr Sproat said the reason was that British Airways wanted to be profitable.



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significant modifications, most of them based on customer advice.

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More ships needed by Navy, says Du Cann

By Ivor Owen

A MAJOR reappraisal of the defence budget to ensure that the Royal Navy is provided with "many more ships" was demanded in the Commons last night by Mr Edward Du Cann, MP for Taunton, and the influential chairman of the 1922 committee of Conservative back-benchers.

There were cheers from both sides of the House when Mr Du Cann, speaking in a debate on the Royal Navy, declared: "To those who say, 'we cannot afford it,' I reply that we cannot afford not to."

Mr Peter Blaker, Minister of State for the Armed Forces, confirmed that the Government was no longer prepared to sell the aircraft carrier Invincible to the Australian Government. But he was subjected to repeated interventions, mostly from the Tory benches, pressing for a strengthening of the Navy.

"Since the British Telecommunications Act 1981 received Royal Assent less than a year ago, some progress has been made in breaking the state monopoly in telecommunications. I have licensed the Mercury Consortium to provide a new telecommunications network in competition with BT. I intend shortly to issue a general licence permitting all bona fide value-added network service operators to use the BT and Mercury networks. The way is now opening for the private sector to sell telephone apparatus direct to the public. Liberalisation of telecommunications has started and we intend to see it through. For

Mr John Nott, the Defence Secretary, was reminded by Mr Du Cann of the recent statement by Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton, a former Chief of Defence Staff, that had the Falklands crisis occurred in two years time, Britain would not have been able to muster a task force.

He challenged the Minister:

"What are we doing—what must we do—to disprove that apparently informed assertion?"

Mr Du Cann looked for significant policy changes in the Defence White Paper due to be published before the end of the year in which the Government will reflect the lessons learned from the Falklands operation.

He insisted that there must be a clear analysis of the UK's defence requirements—not just a statement of what could be afforded.

Security statement

Mrs Thatcher is to make a statement in the Commons today in view of growing speculation that a major spy scandal is about to erupt.

The Prime Minister has been subjected since Friday to increasing pressure from MPs.

Mr Geoffrey Dickens (Con, Huddersfield West) yesterday abandoned his plan to demand an emergency Commons debate on the subject when he heard of the Prime Minister's decision.

THE FUTURE OF BRITISH TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Jenkin launches privatisation plan

PLANS FOR THE privatisation of the British telecommunications industry were announced in the Commons yesterday by Mr Patrick Jenkin, Secretary of State for Industry. He told MPs that the earliest opportunity would be taken to introduce legislation which, while keeping British Telecom as a single enterprise, would allow a majority shareholding by the private sector.

Mr Jenkin's full statement was: "It is the Government's aim to promote consumer choice. Wherever possible, we want industrial and commercial decisions to be determined by the market and not by the state. We believe that consumer choice and the discipline of the market lead to more stable prices, improved efficiency and a higher quality of service."

"Since the British Telecommunications Act 1981 received Royal Assent less than a year ago, some progress has been made in breaking the state monopoly in telecommunications. I have licensed the Mercury Consortium to provide a new telecommunications network in competition with BT. I intend shortly to issue a general licence permitting all bona fide value-added network service operators to use the BT and Mercury networks. The way is now opening for the private sector to sell telephone apparatus direct to the public. Liberalisation of telecommunications has started and we intend to see it through. For



Roger Taylor
Mr Patrick Jenkin (right), Secretary of State for Industry, and Mr Kenneth Baker, Minister of Information Technology, answering questions at a Press conference on the Government's plans for the telecommunications industry

to decide when and how much to

The rules in Britain will then borrow, taking account of internal factors and market conditions in the same way as with all that means in terms of any other private sector company. This will mean not only a greater flexibility for BT and less pressure on consumers and taxpayers, but also that BT will be subject to proper market disciplines. BT will be in a position to provide better services which are more responsive to customer needs like those provided by the privately-owned telephone companies in the United States.

"BT plc will nevertheless dominate the British market for telecommunications for some years yet. The Government considers therefore that there will be a need for regulatory arrangements for the industry to balance the interests of those supplying telecommunications services, their customers, their competitors, their employees, their investors and their suppliers. The legislation will reform the arrangements for licensing telecommunications so as to end BT's exclusive privilege and its role in licensing. Instead, there will be a new Office of Telecommunications, modelled on the Office of Fair Trading, under a director general appointed by me. He will have powers similar to those of the Director General of Fair Trading. He will operate with the same degree of independence from Government. It will be his job to ensure fair competition and fair prices."

"As a nationalised industry, BT does not have direct access to financial markets. Its borrowing is controlled by Government and counts against the public sector borrowing requirement. To bring inflation under control, these borrowings have inevitably to be subject to strict limits. But external finance is only part of the picture. In the past, monopoly power has allowed BT to raise prices to finance investment without doing all that could be done to increase efficiency. Around 90 per cent of BT's investment programme, about £2,200m this year, has been self-financed. By self-financed I mean, of course, customer financed: BT's charges to customers not only cover current running costs, but are also paying for 90 per cent of new investment. As a result, charges have risen steeply while investment is still not enough. Unless something is done radically to change the capital structure and ownership of BT and to provide a direct spur to efficiency, higher investment will mean still higher charges for the customer. The Government, BT and the general public would find that unacceptable. We need to free BT from traditional forms of Government control."

"We will therefore take the earliest opportunity to introduce legislation which, while keeping BT as a single enterprise, will enable it to be converted into a Companies Act company, British Telecommunications plc. The legislation will allow the sale of shares in that company to the public. It is our intention, after the next election, to offer up to 51 per cent of the shares on the market in one or more tranches."

"Once half of the shares have been sold, the Government will give up control over the commercial decisions of BT plc. BT plc will be outside the public sector; its borrowing will cease to be subject to Exchequer control, and it will look to its shareholders and the markets for its external financing. It will be for the board of the company

to make the opportunities it is being given to compete with BT to get subscribers' custom. Competition to win market share here at home will make the industry more competitive abroad."

"Sir George Jefferson and the BT board have recognised that inefficiencies, operated when BT was an unchallenged monopoly can no longer be

free

them

to

them

TECHNOLOGY

EDITED BY ALAN CANE

VIDEO AND FILM

Decline of the sponsored film could be reversed

BY JOHN CHITTOCK

THERE IS a tradition in industrial film sponsorship which goes back almost to the beginning of the cinema. In the UK, great company names linked to that tradition have included Shell, ICI and Unilever, and others which became big enough to spawn nationalised industries — such as Imperial Airways, the Gas Light and Coke Company and Richard Thomas and Baldwin (steel, for those too young to remember).

This tradition of sponsorship has been based historically on a great sense of social responsibility, yielding classic films such as *Housing Problems*, *Enough to Eat*, even Robert Flaherty's *Nanook of the North* — made in 1922 and effectively sponsored by Revillon Frères, a fur company.

Since those days, the concept of sponsorship has become slightly sullied, not helped by the debasement of the word on U.S. television and the growth of sporting promotions. Now, that video has arrived, Rothman, with a history of the world soccer cup, Courvoisier on teaching golf, Pedigree Petfoods on dog care, have been among the early starters with specially-made programmes. Hardly in the class of *Nanook of the North*, but better things may come soon.

At least two international companies have impressive plans for socially important subjects aimed at video viewers — and others are working away at ideas.

Golfing tips

Courvoisier has been encouraged to sponsor a second on golf — *Tips from the Masters* (at the Dunlop Masters Tournament). This will sell at the subsidised price of £14.95 per copy. Michael Barratt, the producer, also has another ready for launching, *Box BQ*, or how to run a barbecue, and sponsored by a tobacco company.

Here, of course, comes the rub. One can imagine Jeremy Isaacs over at Channel Four curling a fierce Scottish eyebrow and saying: "I told you so."

What he will make of the news that a second tobacco company, Rothman, are paying for advertisements to go to videocassette feature films released by InterVision may be unrepeatable.

The InterVision deal, believed to be worth £4m for one year, contract, will place tobacco product advertising at the front of adult and X-rated

video-cassette films in the InterVision library. No doubt there will be protests (Action on Smoking and Health have, predictably, reacted already).

Advertising on videocassettes was inevitable and some consumer programmes are being produced solely as a vehicle for advertising — such as the Holliday Video Brochures now being prepared for the service. Hopefully, those opportunities will come later, especially as the specialised, neglected areas of television programming peculiar to Channel Four's brief, are not the type of subject traditionally favoured by the sponsored film.

Meanwhile, sponsorship for the home video market has arrived. Rothman, with a history of the world soccer cup, Courvoisier on teaching golf, Pedigree Petfoods on dog care, have been among the early starters with specially-made programmes. Hardly in the class of *Nanook of the North*, but better things may come soon.

Yet advertising on video-cassettes may have less of a future than outright sponsorship, because the messages of advertising tend to be ephemeral — like television and newspapers — needing instant impact with large audiences.

But sponsorship of video programmes could offer a return spread over years, going on earning revenue and considerable prestige — such as happens with the highly-successful books sponsored by Shell about the countryside, nature and travel.

All of which comes back to where we started with the sponsored film. Shell has been a substantial force in forcing the reputation and integrity of sponsored film. Such qualities may be urgently needed in the sponsored videocassette business if it is to give stature to the medium as happened with sponsored documentaries in the cinema. The penalty, if video becomes too rooted in the razzamatazz of marketing and advertising, will be debasement of the medium.

Regrettably, the Shell UK company — which also handles the sponsored books — has no plans as yet. For others willing to take a long-term view of public relations based on the new media, it is an exceptional opportunity to engrave a company name in the history of video — if handled sensibly.

They might even then gain Jeremy Isaacs' approval and a Channel Four seal of integrity.

Fabrication breakthrough opens new possibilities

Novel uses for the hard stuff

FOLLOWING THE development at the company's Schenectady research laboratories of a relatively simple and inexpensive way of fabricating high density silicon carbide components, GE (U.S.A.) has established a manufacturing facility at Houston.

The new business will focus, initially, on the fabrication of wear components that take advantage of the material's exceptional hardness and outstanding corrosion resistance. Silicon carbide ranks, immediately behind diamond and cubic boron nitride and it is virtually inert chemically.

Among the first items to be made will be parts subject to wear in machines such as pumps, valves and compressors. But GE is also considering the manufacture of parts for reciprocating engines and gas turbines where the high temperature characteristics and low weight will also be beneficial. One of the first products will be liners for natural gas wells where the material will be substituted for tungsten carbide. Such items are subjected to abrasive-laden gas flows at 10,000 lb/sq inch and do not last long.

Test samples in silicon car-

bide, however, have lasted up to two years in one very "sour" (corrosive) natural gas well and are still going strong.

In GE's fabrication process, die pressing, slip casting, injection moulding or extrusion are employed to form the raw carbide powder into a basic shape. It is relatively porous and weak in this form but is then made dense by firing.

The company claims that the resulting parts are superior to those produced by the more complicated competitive techniques in which a high pressure-hot pressing operation is employed to form the basic shape.

AUTOMATE OR LIQUIDATE!

Viewdata Project planned

A TWO-YEAR investigation of the value of the business use of viewdata has been set up by a consortium of firms including Sony and ICL.

Organised by Langton Information Systems, a consultancy specialising in electronic publishing and viewdata, the aims of the project are to consolidate experiences from the current use of viewdata throughout UK businesses. Select 30 suitable participating organisations with whom to implement supported business viewdata trials and conduct an intense awareness and experience sharing programme for all taking part.

The project, called "PAVE" is sponsored by Langton, Sony, Prestel (the British Telecom viewdata operation) and ICL.

They will provide financial support to encourage the implementation of viewdata trials. Banks are expected to join the group shortly.

Reviews of progress are expected to be issued regularly and participating users and manufacturers will be given reports of the study. Langton will supply full details on 01-434 1031.

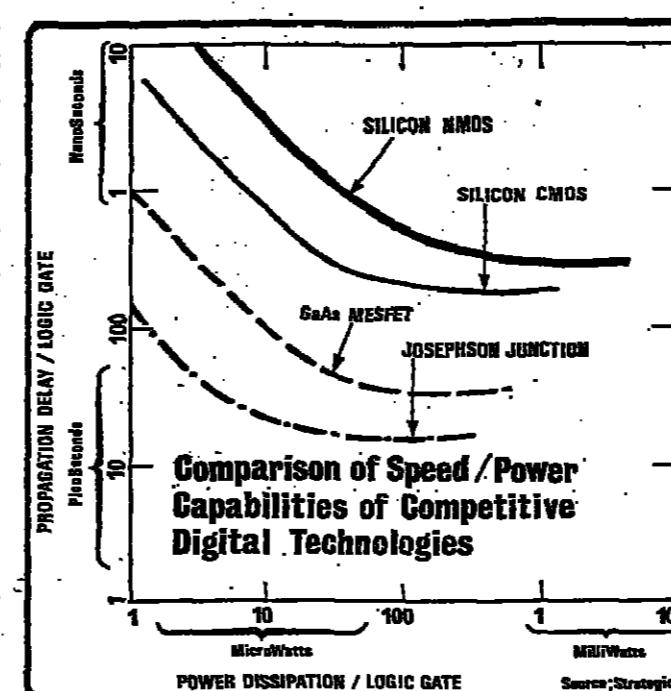
Conference CAD view

WHAT IS thought to be the first pan-European conference and exhibition for users of computer-aided design is to be held in the Berlin International Congress Centre from March 14 to 17 next year. More about Camp '83 from PO Box 191740, Messedamm 22, D-1000, Berlin 19.

Gallium arsenide is making its mark in semiconductors

Faster than silicon circuitry

BY ALAN CANE



Propagation delay is a measure of speed: NMOS is the most popular silicon technology today; CMOS needs less power.

Josephson is a technology of the future

scale integrated circuit technology by the end of the decade."

GaAs circuitry is expected to find its chief applications in "office of the future" systems, especially those involving satellite transmissions.

The Strategic report notes: "The high speed capabilities inherent in the GaAs structures will provide the most cost effective means of implementing the satellite business communications functions."

Not surprisingly, one of the earliest IBM-related GaAs IC developments has been in the area of high frequency/low noise amplifiers operating at conventional satellite microwave frequency ranges."

It goes on: "The area offering greatest potential for GaAs technology application is in voice entry to computer systems... the problems involve a complex task of pattern recognition using very high speed signal processing. Fortunately, the inherent capabilities of GaAs technology provide a suitable match and solution for these problems."

But the area of application which excited the earliest interest was the prospect of fast (conventional) computers. Fujitsu is thought to have taken something of a lead in the development of supercomputers based on GaAs chips and to have implemented part of a central processing unit on a GaAs gate array integrated circuit.

The Strategic report warns: "U.S. computer manufacturers should pay particular attention to Fujitsu's progress. If Fujitsu's efforts are not taken seriously and if similar development programmes are not initiated in the U.S., Fujitsu is likely to become the world leader in the large mainframe computer marketplace based on the use of GaAs IC technology, pulling Amdahl along for the ride."

The Strategic scenario is perhaps over dramatic: few semiconductor specialists believe that the problems of working in GaAs will be solved quickly enough to give it the advantage over silicon; if NTT has solved optical amplification using GaAs, however, the supercomputer (either electron or photon based) may not be far behind.

"Impact of Gallium Arsenide," Strategic Incorporated, available from IPI, 134 Holland Park Avenue, London W11, 01-221 0986.

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Metalworking

ShapeCut's cnc cutting machines

A RANGE of CNC cutting machines for the metal profiling industry has been introduced by ShapeCut of Reading, which, since the acquisition of BOC's cutting division by a Swedish company, claims to be the only major British manufacturer left in the field.

ShapeCut says that it has worked on the premise that it was time to replace line following systems and offer users the benefits of CNC at sensible prices.

Using basic bridge design with positive drive at both ends of the bridge, the range uses electric clutches on the cross travel and mechanical ones on the long travel.

Standard machines will accommodate 2m or 3m wide plates, take up to six motorised heads, while rail is in 2m modules of any length.

Profile and positioning speed is up to 3m per minute with additional facilities such as height control, water spray, auto ignition and punch or powder marking also available.

CNC options are either the BURNY II or BURNY IV — the former suited for the general trade shop where perhaps more than a third of the work will consist of cutting only circles, rings, squares and gussets where the dimensions can be simply dialled in.

The latter controller offers perhaps over dramatic: few semiconductor specialists believe that the problems of working in GaAs will be solved quickly enough to give it the advantage over silicon; if NTT has solved optical amplification using GaAs, however, the supercomputer (either electron or photon based) may not be far behind.

The company hints at about £22,000 for a full CNC machine with three motorised heads, 3m cutting width and 6m of rail, including installation.

ShapeCut is at Perimeter Road, Woodley, Reading, Berks 0734 696365.

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THE MANAGEMENT PAGE: Small Business

How Mike James won a prize, but then went under

Ian Hamilton Fazey reports on the demise of an enterprising company

IF TENACITY were the only requirement for business survival, then Mike James would be a candidate for immortality. But it isn't. Despite an around-the-clock working day James is yet another small businessman to have lost his company in the recession.

He has not yet lost his greatest personal asset, however: the unique product he invented. Its U.S. patent is still pending but those for the UK, West Germany and Australia have already been granted to him.

James's company was launched at the end of 1980 with a great deal of publicity, including a report on this page.

Peacock, a pet-food manufacturer, featured James and his tank in a full colour advertising campaign for its Aquarian fishtank range. But despite this endorsement, and others from leading zoologists, many potential customers were still sceptical and rival manufacturers of traditional aquaria, not unnaturally, lobbied against it.

James eventually proved his invention by offering it for trial to leading writers in the trade press. Their ecstatic reviews gave the product credibility. But unfortunately all of this took most of 1981. James had expected much faster acceptance. Indeed, his forecasts were for first-year sales of £150,000 and a small profit.

Ecstatic

So even though future prospects looked brilliant, with full order books likely for years to come, James was forced to confront the first immutable rule of all business trading: it is today's bill that kills, not tomorrow's order that sustains.

In his case, the Midland Bank decided that a £38,000 overdraft was too high a risk and forced him into liquidation in January. Seven months on, James has still not got over the shock. He had kept his bank manager fully informed of progress but the branch concerned was downgraded on the manager's retirement. When Aquarama's account came up for transfer to a larger office where James's



The man who went up the wall to get afloat

Ian Hamilton Fazey reports on a company that won a prize money

this was the prime marketing objective of his first year. He had already worked out that his best sales outlets would be the furniture departments of large stores—he was selling a luxury item of decorative furniture, not an aquarium for hobbyists—but he knew that without credibility in the pet trade, the Aquashelf would be criticised in the shops where people went to buy their fish. And this could result in customers demanding their money back.

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The reality was sales of £27,000 and first year losses of £70,000.

On top of that, promotional costs were inevitably heavy, given the scepticism of the pet trade and the novelty of the product.

James says that he was never really worried because things were clearly moving. An order from Hong Kong worth more than £25m a year is still a possibility, and the Aquashelf was well received elsewhere round the world. Large department stores in the North West and the South East had accepted the product; it is still selling steadily in both regions. He believes that expansion into other major cities alone would put the second year finances into break-even with profits and payback certain in 1983.

What James has proved is that you need considerably more financial support than he had in order to manufacture a new product and sustain the manufacturing overheads while establishing the product's market.

James's company was

launched at the end of 1980 with a great deal of publicity, including a report on this page.

history was not so well known. After set-up costs he relied on financing practically everything out of income while trying to break new ground in a conservative industry.

His mistake was probably not to be ruthlessly pessimistic and promise profits only in the third year, not the first. Then he would probably still have been on budget today. As with many small businessmen he was short on advice in this area and too inexperienced to know when to ask for it.

But James is not finished.

Peacock, a wholesaler of

trinkets, bought Aquarama's assets for £1,500 to keep the Aquashelf afloat. James is an unpaid partner in a company called Aquasales, which is trading profitably, selling a steady trickle of Aquashelfs through several major department stores.

There are already nearly

1,000 satisfied customers, each advertising his rather elegant product in the most effective way—by word of mouth. The Hong Kong deal is still in the offing and the patents—his personal property—could yet lead to licensing deals in Britain and abroad for anyone with spare manufacturing capacity. And there's no shortage of that.

A marketing man all his life,

James is ever optimistic. But he is chastened by the thought that manufacturing is probably not the way to become rich. He is sure his product will one day make someone's fortune. He just hopes it is his own.

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James's company

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FINANCIAL TIMES

BRACKEN HOUSE, CANNON STREET, LONDON EC4P 4BY
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Tuesday July 20 1982

Unshackling a monopoly

CAN IT really make sense to leave a heavily protected state monopoly in charge of an important part of the communications revolution? The Government clearly thinks not. And with one eye on the privately owned and notably efficient Bell System in the U.S., Mr Patrick Jenkin, the Industry Secretary, has announced that 51 per cent of British Telecom is to be sold to the public if the Government survives the hurdle of the next election.

On the face of it the Bell System offers an attractive model—a model that is all the more appealing to the present Government in the light of recent moves to have American Telephone & Telegraph, the holding company, reduce its monopoly by divesting itself of its local telephone operating companies. But it is questionable how far the transfer of 51 per cent of the ownership of British Telecom to the private sector will help produce similarly impressive results.

One of the chief disciplines of the capital market—the threat of takeover—will be largely absent since the Government will retain 49 per cent. And since private individuals are, in the aggregate, net sellers of ordinary shares to institutions such as insurance companies and pension funds, the public will not be particularly well represented on the share register. In effect a measure of control will pass from civil servants mainly to professional fund managers whose ability to monitor the performance of a large-scale high technology concern of this kind is unproven.

Control

What privatisation will bring is greater access to capital for British Telecom, which has hitherto struggled under the yoke of the Treasury which traditionally uses the public sector's growth industries as match cows with which to reduce the public sector borrowing requirement. It is good that this state undertaking may now stand a sporting chance of being able to find adequate finance for its investment programme, though a dismal reflection on the system of public expenditure control that makes privatisation, with attendant transaction costs, the only obvious way to achieve that end.

Arguably the more important part of yesterday's White Paper

concerns British Telecom's role in its own market place. Mr Jenkin accepts that British Telecom will continue to dominate the market for telecommunications for some years and that proper regulatory arrangements will be needed to balance the interests of suppliers, customers, employees, investors and the telecommunications companies themselves. To that end the Government proposes to set up a new Office of Telecommunications, to be modelled on the Office of Fair Trading. The director general of the new office would be required to ensure fair competition and fair prices.

Competition

Control over tariffs is essential if British Telecom is not to abuse its monopoly pricing power either by squeezing the consumer or through undermining competitors via excessively low prices. And the meaning of "fair competition" which remains unelaborated in the White Paper, will need considerable spelling out to ensure that the full benefits of competition are reaped.

There is something inherently worrying about a single monopoly corporation taking all the decisions about, say, the renewal of cable and transmission equipment and investment in new exchanges. More competition in communications would help reduce the risk of over-dependence on one kind of technology or system. And by attacking British Telecom's central purchasing power, it would ensure that suppliers were no longer building to a single specification. The scope for new products, new export opportunities and new jobs would be opened up.

A number of questions about the proposed flotation remain to be answered. Existing pension obligations, for example, which involve all manner of technical problems at British Telecom relating to past funding liabilities, are to be safeguarded; this could pose prospectus headaches. But the general case for opening up the field to more competition is a powerful one. The mere existence of Mercury, a potential private-sector inter-city telephone system operator, has already visibly sharpened up British Telecom's responses. That is the way to produce a communications network which is more responsive to consumers' needs.

Close to a deal in Namibia

NEGOTIATIONS FOR a peaceful settlement in Namibia (South West Africa) seem to be close to success. Talks taking place in Washington, New York and Angola in the coming days are widely regarded as crucial to the fate of more than four years of painstaking diplomacy, and thousands of miles of diplomatic shuttling, which have been involved in the effort. If it does succeed, the exercise will represent a victory for good sense in Africa, it will remove a major source of instability in a region desperately in need of economic development and it will provide a notable foreign policy success both for President Reagan in Washington and for the cause of Western co-operation.

Presence

The settlement plan sponsored by five Western nations provides for a United Nations-supervised ceasefire in the territory, where South African troops have been fighting guerrillas from the South West Africa People's Organisation for some 15 years. There would then be a progressive withdrawal of South African troops, while a joint UN-South African administration made the necessary arrangements for an election to a constitution-drafting assembly—which in turn would lead the territory to independence.

In spite of general agreement on the plan, its implementation has been bedevilled by profound political mistrust between, on the one hand, South Africa and its sympathisers in Namibia and, on the other, Swapo and its African allies in the Organisation of African Unity.

One major stumbling block remains in the way of the latest hopes of agreement: the presence of an estimated 15,000 to 20,000 Cuban troops in Angola, where Swapo's guerrillas have their bases. The question of the Cuban troops has never been directly part of the Namibian negotiations, but it has been indirectly linked since the advent of the Reagan administration in Washington. An awareness of U.S. concern has encouraged South Africa to use their presence as a key bargaining tool.

Both Angola and its African

allies regard the presence of Cuban troops in that country as an internal matter for the Angolan government. They were summoned during the 1975 civil war, it is argued, when South African troops invaded from Namibia, and they will withdraw only when the threat of further South African aggression against Angola (as opposed to Swapo) is finally removed.

There is no doubt that South Africa would be reassured by the departure of the Cuban troops and that Mr P. W. Botha, the South African Prime Minister, needs such a card to present to his own domestic electorate to persuade them that a Namibia settlement is worthwhile.

What the U.S. negotiators have sought to do is reach a separate deal with Angola on Cuban withdrawal, which the Angolan government can present as a sovereign decision, while Mr Botha could argue that it was part of the package. The danger is that Mr Botha's very public demands for direct linkage of the two issues may make it impossible for Angola to agree.

It would be a tragedy if the issue of the Cubans were allowed to abort the Namibian negotiations at this late stage. Angola has made it absolutely clear that they will leave when the threat of South African attack is removed—and with South African units now operating at will across the Namibian border, that is a very real threat.

Assurance

What the Western five must do is persuade Angola and its African allies that it is not just a question of Cuban withdrawal that is related—indirectly—to a Namibian settlement, but the stability of the whole region. If the Africans could be given a Western-backed assurance that South Africa would cease its destabilisation activities in other parts of the region—for example in training and supplying anti-government guerrillas in Mozambique—then a demand for Cuban withdrawal might become more acceptable.

In that way, a Namibian settlement would indeed become what its promoters desire: a basis for stabilisation throughout southern Africa.

THE CANADIAN banking system, long recognised as one of the strongest in the world, is going through a period of extraordinary uncertainty. Last week, Mr Ronald Frazer, who as chairman of the Royal Bank of Canada, heads the fourth largest bank in North America, wrote to his 1,500 branch managers: "There is no justification whatsoever for any doubt as to the safety of depositors' funds in the Royal Bank of Canada," he told them. "... It would be nothing short of preposterous for anyone to suggest even the slightest possibility of a situation in which the Royal could not meet its obligations to depositors."

A few days earlier, a provincial politician in British Columbia had briefly made the headlines with a wholly unfounded claim that another major Canadian bank was in danger of going under. At about the same time, on the other side of the country, a third large bank suffered a brief run at one of its branches in Newfoundland.

What makes this so remarkable is that by any objective standard the integrity of the big chartered banks in Canada cannot be questioned. It is true that their capital ratios have deteriorated over the last decade—C\$1 of net worth now supports nearly C\$32 of assets compared with C\$21 a decade ago—but this pattern is not out of line with banks in other countries.

The system is concentrated around five powerful banks, which together control over four-fifths of the country's banking assets, and it has an enormous strength in the quality of the banks' liabilities, which are built on a solid core of retail deposits collected through a network of 7,500 branches spread across a diversified economy. These deposits represent something like four-fifths of their Canadian dollar liabilities.

The banks are also well spread internationally—roughly two-fifths of their business with a heavy emphasis on the U.S. and Western Europe.

Their role in the economy and society is broadly comparable to that of the UK clearing banks, on which they are modelled. So the present mood of jittery concern, which has been fully reflected in tumbling prices on the stock exchange, is obviously alarming.

It stems from three connected sources. One is the serious liquidity strain now being faced by just about the entire Canadian company sector at a time when profits are falling through the floor. Another is the level of business confidence in the economic management of the Federal Government, which is at a very low ebb. Third, and most important, is the financial condition of Dome Petroleum, a once high-flying energy group which has run into serious cash flow difficulties. With shareholders' funds of little more than C\$1bn, it

is modulating policies of the banks, which were swept along in the mood of euphoria when it seemed that energy prices could only go up. Instead, lower than expected gas sales, rising interest rates and new taxes meant that many companies had far less money available to them than they had expected.

The banks and the Government are now attempting to agree on how to share the gain of a financial reconstruction.

With the assets backing Mr Gerald Bouey, Governor of the Bank of Canada, says that "whether there will be any pain at all in the long run is another question."

Dome is the most spectacular victim of the hangover which has hit the energy sector after its acquisition binge of the past two years. There are others: Turbo Resources, for instance, where total assets rose from

CS167m to more than CS1bn in two years with the help of roughly CS700m of bank loans. C\$4bn of which is owed to the Canadian banks.

In the view of Mr William Kennett, Canada's Inspector General of Banks, "if the Dome question would be resolved, the wholly unwarranted concern about the Canadian banks would disappear." Mr William Mulholland, chairman of the Bank of Montreal, agrees.

"Dome simply has to be fixed, because it has become a symbol," he says. "The consequences of not fixing it are out of proportion to the size of the problem."

At the moment, the company is up to date with all its interest payments. But it has an enormous volume of debt falling due in the coming months, which will have to be rolled over in some way.

The quality of Dome's security varies from bank to bank, which complicates the problem. But bankers and government officials agree on one point: the company is backed by a solid portfolio of energy assets, capable of producing revenues when they are eventually brought into full production. "The worth is there: I'm satisfied of that," says Mr Russell Harrison, chairman of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce which is one of Dome's biggest lenders.

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It stems from three connected sources. One is the serious liquidity strain now being faced by just about the entire Canadian company sector at a time when profits are falling through the floor. Another is the level of business confidence in the economic management of the Federal Government, which is at a very low ebb. Third, and most important, is the financial condition of Dome Petroleum, a once high-flying energy group which has run into serious cash flow difficulties. With shareholders' funds of little more than C\$1bn, it

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The banks and the Government are also well spread internationally—roughly two-fifths

BRITISH MERCHANT FLEET

Hopes of a Falklands boost

By Andrew Fisher, Shipping Correspondent

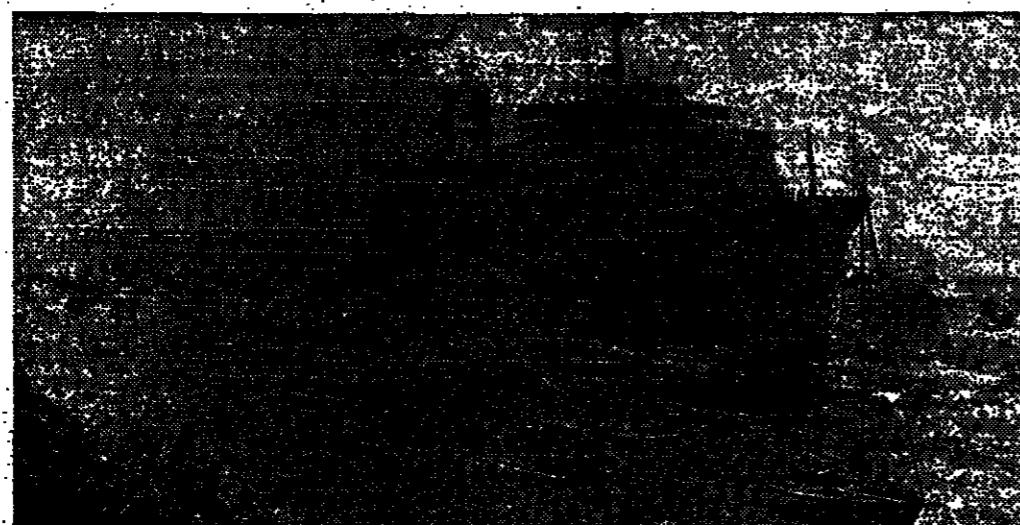
BRITISH SHIP OWNERS, who have watched the UK merchant fleet shrink by over 40 per cent during the past six years, are hoping that the Falklands campaign will prove a turning point in the fortunes of the industry. The involvement of 50 merchant ships, including the liners *Canberra* and *QE2*, in the task force sent to recapture the islands has focused public attention on the fleet more effectively than several years of argument by the industry.

Shipowners hope that the Government will now heed their repeated calls in recent years for special investment allowances to stimulate spending on new vessels.

Up to now, the Conservative administration, with its emphasis on the free play of market forces, has set in face firmly against "any form of special assistance to shipowners.

But in the wake of the Falklands crisis the Department of Trade and Defence intend to look at the situation again. It seems, however, that this will be done largely from a defence viewpoint and the industry is not particularly confident of getting financial assistance.

Nevertheless, there have been some sympathetic noises from Westminster. "The merchant



The Canberra returns to Southampton from the Falklands conflict

bought to maintain the fleet at even its present level. UK shipping companies last year signed contracts for only 25 ships totalling 463,000 dwt, against 40 of 1.14m dwt in 1980.

Why the decline? To some extent the UK industry is part of a world problem. The shipping industry generally is having to struggle to make money at a time of economic stagnation, low freight rates, sluggish oil markets, and a surplus of cargo ships ordered in better times.

"Today," observes Mr Nicholas Barber, a director of Ocean Transport and Trading, "you won't find a cheerful ship-owner in any part of this country or the world."

But the gloom in the industry is relative. The higher-cost northern European fleets have had a harder time keeping afloat than those of the Far East. Even the Greeks, rarely tied to single trades or customers, have been suffering.

UK shipping statistics tell a bleak story. The fleet is now slightly smaller than in 1970, while the world fleet has more than doubled since then to 683m deadweight tons. UK tonnage is now just over 29m dwt—4.3 per cent of the world total. In 1975, when UK tonnage peaked at 50m dwt, that represented 9 per cent of the world total.

The General Council of British Shipping (GCBS) is worried that too few new ships are being

built. Global shipping problems

apart, there are other reasons for the decline in the British tonnage. One factor has been the switch to container shipping, in which the UK is a world leader, with about 10 per cent of the international fleet.

One modern container ship of about 35,000 dwt, with 2,000 containers on board, can carry as much cargo as six conventional vessels of 14,000 dwt.

Another factor has been the world oil glut. Tankers account for a high proportion of UK tonnage—over 60 per cent currently—and the weeding out of these vessels at a time when the world surplus is estimated at over 100m dwt accounts for a substantial proportion of the fleet's decline.

The industry estimates it costs £1,000 more a day to run a medium-sized bulk carrier or tanker under the UK flag than it does under a cheaper Far Eastern flag.

GCBS reckons that UK companies have lagged behind some of their European and Japanese competitors in developing partly-automated ships which would enable crews of 18 instead of 23 people to be used on standard cargo carriers. Such savings could cut expenses sharply since manning costs generally represent about 50 per cent of a vessel's running expenses.

The industry's new round of lobbying may come to nothing, but the Falklands crisis has made the issue a live one.

What irks the UK industry is

that countries such as France, Japan and Germany have offered considerable help to their shipowners to buy new vessels. France's socialist government is promoting the growth of its merchant fleet through subsidies. Japan has been running a cheap interest rate scheme, although this has just been phased out. Sweden is planning to give shipowners tax refunds.

The GCBS wants the Government to allow owners to set an extra 40 per cent of investment costs against tax in one or more years—on top of the normal 100 per cent tax write-off for investment which companies can generally claim. It would like the allowance to last three years, which it estimates would cost the Government around £200m.

While British Shipbuilders, the nationalised group striving to return to the black, would stand to gain, the council does not want allowances tied to a requirement that orders be placed in the UK.

The industry enjoyed the 40 per cent allowance until this was superseded by the far more generous system of investment grants brought in by the Labour Government in 1966. The grants covered 20 per cent of any in-

Other countries help owners to buy new vessels

vestment and for a time the level rose to 25 per cent.

The grants propelled a strong growth of the UK fleet, helping shipowners move rapidly into high technology and container vessels. In 1966 investment by the industry was £99m. Four years later it had soared to £284m and topped £600m in 1973.

But the Heath Government stopped the grants in 1970—and did not bring back the tax allowances.

The industry's new round of lobbying may come to nothing, but the Falklands crisis has made the issue a live one.

THE REAL budget skirmishes of the 1980s are now clearly not about MX missiles or the cost of the "Fortress Falklands" but about pensions and unemployment pay. And the battles look set to get bigger.

In nearly every major industrialised country, the financing of social security schemes is at the heart of political and economic conflict—which can also spill over into the streets.

The burden comes not just from the repressive unemployed but from the sometimes resigned old. Demographic trends, improved medical care and early retirement schemes herald a dramatic rise in coming years in the proportion of pensioners in total population. It is often overlooked, for instance, that in Britain for every £1 that the Government spends on jobless benefit, £3 goes on aid for the elderly. According to official calculations, the proportion will shift further to 1:3.5 in two years' time.

As the Bank for International Settlements in its annual report observes from the cosy fastness of Basle, governments should have taken more heed of the underlying slowdown of economic growth during the 1970s. It is true that social programmes built up in the days of economic plenty have been left stranded now that the tide of government revenues has gone out.

But what is needed is plainly more than hindsight. After all, social security is there to protect when the going gets rough. The net can hardly be pulled away just as the trapeze wire starts to break. The problem is that policy-makers are left with a series of baffling dilemmas.

The net can hardly be pulled away just as the trapeze wire starts to break. The problem is that policy-makers are left with a series of baffling dilemmas.

• Attempts to ease the jobs market—such as the early retirement programme announced in France and toyed with in Britain and West Germany—also have a counter-effective budgetary impact by adding to pensions financing strains.

• Cuts in welfare spending allied with near-hopeless job prospects (for instance in rundown inner-city areas in both the U.S. and Britain) can easily be a factor spurring crime.

If these efforts do not succeed, the future looks bleak. The demographic outlook is for the worse of both worlds. The overall rise in the proportion of the population of working age could exacerbate the problem of jobs shortage; and the expected increase in the ratio of pensioners is reassuring only if you want to grow old in company, not if you wish to do so in comfort.

Social Security

Pensioners: the pressure on the safety net

By David Marsh

PROPORTION OF OVER-65s IN TOTAL POPULATION

	W. Germany	Japan	UK	U.S.
1950	9.4	4.9	10.7	8.1
1960	14.9	8.6	14.1	11.3
2000	14.6	13.2	12.8	12.7
2025	18.1	16.9	15.8	18.2
2050	17.9	17.6	16.9	18.5

Sources: UN, World Bank

at the moment. The retirement fund could run out of money next year but the Reagan Administration's plans for even bigger cuts in social spending have come unstuck. This, together with the defence build-up and the tax cuts, leaves the budget deficit adrift at over \$100bn, and the world facing yet another surge of higher dollar interest rates.

Underlying the whole problem, demographic prospects are disconcerting. According to the OECD, over-65s will make up 11.8 per cent of the inhabitants of the 24-nation area in 1990, against 11.3 per cent in 1980. At the same time, the proportion of under-15s is expected to decline—to 22.6 per cent from 23.5 per cent—because of the expected lower birth rate; so the overall proportion of the population of working age will rise slightly.

Looking further ahead—which is where the real difficulties may come—the World Bank estimates that by AD 2025 roughly one in six in the big industrial countries will be over 65.

The economic breakthrough to produce both growth and jobs (not necessarily the same thing) to support existing social security structures may come from government-inspired technology drives or la France, or private enterprise-inspired investment along Thatcher/Reagan lines.

If these efforts do not succeed, the future looks bleak. The demographic outlook is for the worse of both worlds. The overall rise in the proportion of the population of working age could exacerbate the problem of jobs shortage; and the expected increase in the ratio of pensioners is reassuring only if you want to grow old in company, not if you wish to do so in comfort.

Letters to the Editor

Actors in the money markets manipulation

From Mr Roger Bootle
Sir—In discussing the recent cut in bank base rates, Wednesday's Lex column commented that the authorities have been "manipulating" rates downwards and that "a fall in base and deposit rates is not really justified yet by the supply and demand for funds in the banking system." Doubtless this latter point has some validity with reference to the relative position of banks and building societies, or even to the level of money market rates, but Lex seemed to be going further. His article appeared to suggest that the reductions in interest rates in general have been in some sense artificial, with the possible implication that they will be short-lived. It would be unfortunate if this misleading impression went unchecked.

Of course rates have fallen due to the actions of the Bank of England, but to refer to this as "manipulation" is to misunderstand the crucial role that the bank plays in the money markets. Through its daily operations in relieving shortages and absorbing surpluses, the bank is bound to express an official view on interest rates, and since it is the only actor in the money markets

who can alter the net supply of funds for the system as a whole, these official intervention rates are the pivotal rates for the whole interest rate structure. Moreover, the markets know this. That is why money market rates tend to respond to signals about the authorities' intentions. In other words, the bank, and therefore ultimately the Government, has a whip hand in the determination of short rates (although they are naturally subject to the constraint of the effects, for example, on the exchange rate, which might follow from their actions). When rates fall without "manipulation" therefore, they do so with the (at least) tacit approval (albeit sometimes with regrets) of the authorities.

The idea that there is something artificial about this last fall because rates were "manipulated" is absurd. In that case they were "manipulated" upwards when the Chancellor announced an increase in MLR from 12 per cent to 14 per cent in his first Budget, "manipulated" up again when he raised MLR in November, 1979, to 17 per cent, "manipulated" down again in stages to 12 per cent, "manipulated" up yet again to 16 per

cent last September, and again steadily "manipulated" down again ever since. It seems that major changes in interest rates through "manipulation" are the only major changes we know.

The abolition of MLR last August may give the impression that the role of the authorities in determining interest rates is reduced, but this is true only superficially. Rates are now supposedly determined by the money markets, but they cannot do this without reference to the official view on interest rates, as expressed in the Bank of England's intervention rates.

The idea that the strength of loan demand indicates the artificiality of recent cut in rates is equally misleading. Of course, the strength of loan demand may threaten the monetary targets and thereby precipitate a policy decision to increase rates, but this would hardly be justified at the moment.

Recent months the growth of bank lending, although still high, has abated, and the various measures of the money supply have been well within the target range. Nor is it true that the growth of lending threatens an unwelcome explosion of

spending. Indeed, it is salutary to consider where the economy might be without buoyant bank lending.

But the implication of Lex's point seemed to be that loan demand of itself could justify higher rates, in the same way that strength of demand for a stock drives up its price. The problem here is that the supply of loans is linked to the supply of deposits, and the supply of deposits is linked to the demand for loans. Without action by the authorities deliberately to withdraw or restrict the supply of funds to the system, there will always be deposits in the system as a whole to meet total loan demand because the very act of lending creates those funds.

The recent cut in interest rates was indeed policy-inspired, but that in no way makes it artificial, nor need it be short-lived, if in the light of domestic recessionary conditions (and world conditions) the authorities see a policy of lower interest rates as a strategic priority.

Roger Bootle,
Economist,
Capel-Cure Myers,
Both House,
Holborn Viaduct, EC1.

ment accounting levels but why make such good commercial practices mandatory (and not other management techniques)? and why require the annual audit of a statement more useful to the statistician than the businessman?

P. R. Pennington-Legh,
51, Kings Road, Windsor.

Investment appraisal

From the President, British Transport Officers' Guild

Sir—When Mr Grenside, a former President of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, urges (July 7) the members of the ICAEW to vote in favour of the SSAP 16 experiment he enlists the help of Bank of England statistics and invokes the haunting spectre of "real profitability" as proof that historical Cost Accounting is a bad thing. These are the stratagems of the economist not the accountant.

Surely those in practice cannot be so arrogant as to believe that their colleagues (not to mention managers) in industry and commerce neither take inflation into account when preparing forecasts and budgets nor appreciate what real return is needed and achieved. Moreover, the argument that HC financial reporting is a "self-delusion" is somewhat monastic as is the belief that the (larger) enterprises which are to be obliged to prepare CCA reports will by the simple expedient of so doing rid themselves of the "unreal" of their predicament.

Yes! By all means encourage comparable and consistent inflation-adjusted reporting—at both statutory and manage-

ment accounting levels but why make such good commercial practices mandatory (and not other management techniques)? and why require the annual audit of a statement more useful to the statistician than the businessman?

P. R. Pennington-Legh,
51, Kings Road, Windsor.

Investment

appraisal

From the President, British Transport Officers' Guild

Sir—Your report in the Financial Times July 2, on the Treasury's booklet on Investment Appraisal in the Public Sector links neatly with your article "Poor financial analysis blamed for weak U.S. investment" of May 24 which agreed that there was a tendency to put too much faith in the misleading objectivity of discounted cash flow techniques.

There is little doubt that these techniques can and are being used for many important issues as managerial crutches. The reliance on these coupled with the continuing high rate of inflation does make it extremely difficult for any substantial investment project which has a long lead time to obtain approval and most schemes of this nature are

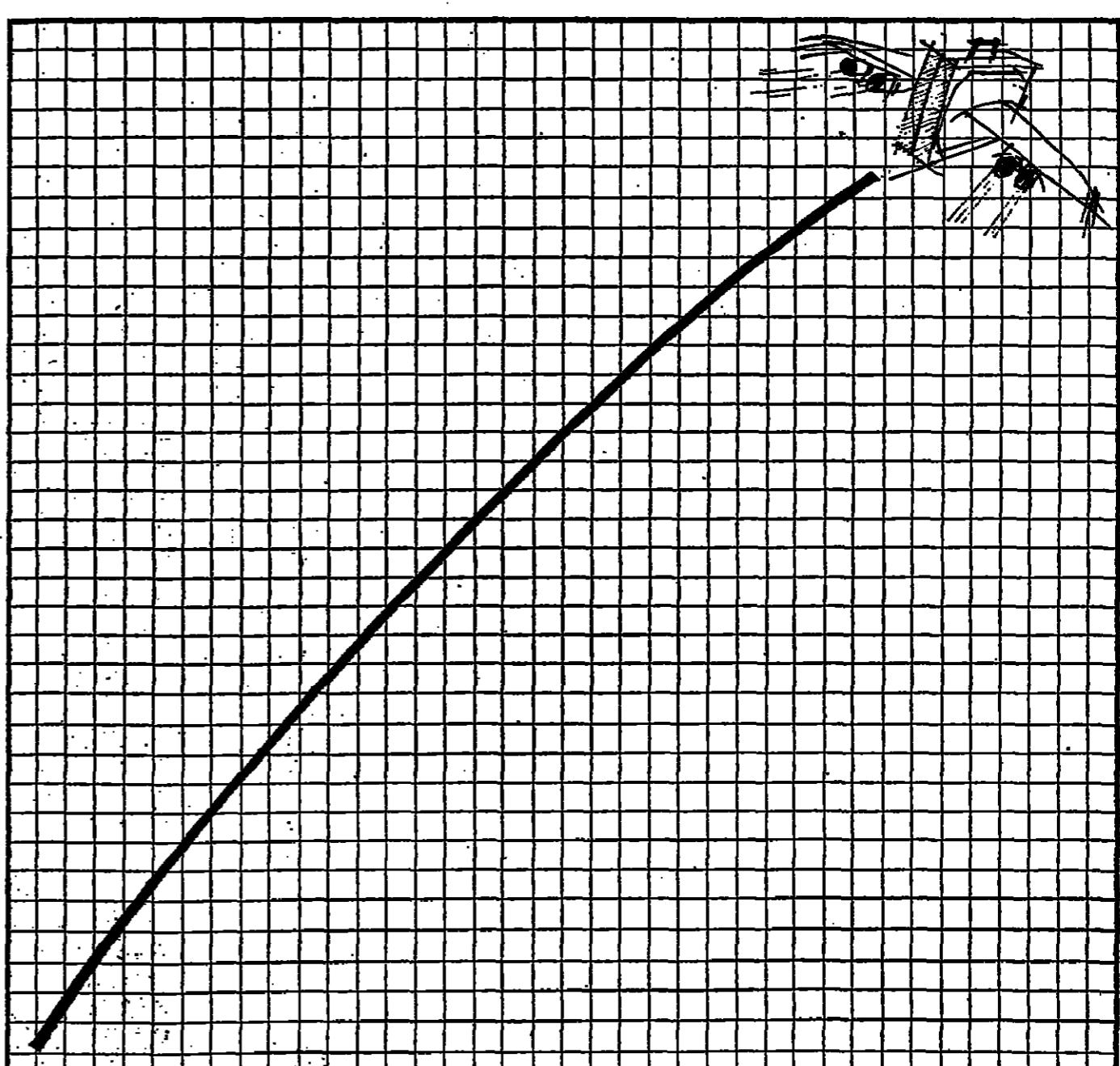
subject to considerable delay during which time the impact of inflation makes the figures involved even more overwhelming, and the decision more difficult. Nobody denies that money is invested wisely, but Slavish adherence to these techniques is not the answer. The future cannot be predicted with any certainty so there is an element of faith in all investment decisions, perhaps, therefore, more attention should be given to a "must have" factor so that managers' minds are directed to the fundamental reason for investment.

M. H. Williams,
Room 307,
West Side Offices,
Kings Cross Station, N1.

Civil Service pay awards

From the Secretary, Council of Civil Service Unions

Sir—One point needs bringing out sharply from Philip Bassett's excellent piece in the Lombard column ("Civil Service pay—the facts" July 15). The research studies done for the Megaw Inquiry, which elicited both points to a decline in Civil Service earnings relative to those outside during 1981, although this did not lead



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Siebe Gorman up 15% to £4m

AN IMPROVEMENT of 15 per cent in pre-tax profits from £3.51m to £4.04m is shown by Siebe Gorman Holdings for the year ending April 3, 1982. The final dividend has been increased from 4.75p net per 25p share to 5.25p, making a total of 7.75p compared with 7.25p.

Second-half profits rose from £1.85m to £2.32m.

The company says the results were achieved despite difficult trading conditions worldwide. The group's UK and international operations showed solid progress, despite these difficulties.

Turnover for the company, which manufactures protective equipment, industrial workwear and leisurewear, rose from £43.8m to £52.24m.

Associate profits fell slightly from £761,000 to £731,000 and trading profits of group companies rose from £2.76m to £3.1m.

Attributable profits increased from £1.49m to £2.17m after net extraordinary debits of £285,000 (£500,000).

After tax at £1.57m (£1.42m), stated earnings per share rose from 20.25p to 23.8p.

• comment

Siebe Gorman has been forced to work quite hard in the last couple of years just to ensure its future, but it has succeeded in its industrial workwear business in the UK.

In March 1980 these companies furnished almost two-thirds of group trading profits; this time—after a second year of decline—the contribution was roughly 35 per cent of a smaller total.

The position has been to some extent relieved by eliminating losses in leisurewear, helping the textile division to reach peak profitability, and by substantial degearing, saving £4m of net interest.

The acquisition of Rieft during the second half came too late to affect the result materially, but Siebe Gorman is pleased with its West German acquisition, and is looking for a significant contribution in the current year.

There is apparently not much short-term improvement to be expected from the activity-sensitive industrial side, but engineering should do better this year, and the company is also looking for higher profits in safety footwear.

Up to 1980, the shares yield a notch under 6 per cent, covered three times by historic earnings and giving little away.

SKETCHLEY

The shareholders of Renter approved the agreement and plan of merger with Sketchley by July 16. Renter is now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Sketchley.

Initial expands by 16.3% to £22.9m

WITH second half pre-tax profits coming through ahead from £10.78m to £11.91m, Initial, formerly Initial Services, the towels, coats, garments hire and replacement concern, finished the year to March 31 1982 at £22.92m, compared with £19.1m, a rise of 16.3 per cent.

This was achieved on a 12 month turnover figure up by 14.3 per cent from £45.33m to £56.16m.

At halfway profits had increased to £11.01m (£8.93m) on turnover of £29.43m, against £21.81m.

The dividend is stepped up to 10.75p (9p) with final payment of 7.5p net.

Results for the year exclude any figures from Consolidated Laundrys of the U.S. or Union of Lavenderies Industries SA of Spain.

The American company, formerly part of Sears Industries, a subsidiary of Sears Holdings, was acquired at the end of 1981 for £22m, and provides linen supply, industrial uniforms and hospital services.

Last November, Initial agreed After minorities of £414,000 (£366,000) and a decreased extraordinary debit amounting to £18,000 (£231,000), the available balance came through 34.4 per cent share of £14.97m, compared with £11.1m.

After acquisitions totalling £5.74m, against £4.8m, there was a retained profit of £9.23m (£8.34m).

Goodwill amounting to £1.31m has been written off through reserves and not treated as an extraordinary item. Comparative figures have been adjusted accordingly.

Initial

Initial's results were in line with expectations, though £0.35m of funding costs relating to two months of the U.S. acquisition have been incurred without any profits contribution. However acquisitions and volume growth overseas hide the impact of the

recession on the UK business where only a small advance was achieved. The cost of reducing administrative staff in the UK is treated as an extraordinary item, partly offset by a gain on the sale of a business. Further

recovery may be necessary in the current year if demand does not show an upturn. Despite the purchases in the U.S. and Spain the balance sheet remains strong. Gearing is up from a nominal 4 per cent to approaching 17 per cent, but the group has ample cash and borrowing facilities available for more acquisitions, probably with an eye to expanding its new foothold in North America. The group's venture into films, which has been purely because of the tax advantages, has ended up two successes, but the third, and latest, release—"Partners" appears to have flopped. With the home market for its traditional business remaining depressed the group must look overseas and at new developments for growth this year. Yesterday the shares rose 8p to 23.3p, yielding 6.3 per cent and giving a fully taxed historic p/e of over 12.

• comment

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C H Industrials downturn to £41,000

INCLUDING A loss of £201,000 from discontinued operations, taxable profits of CH Industrials, automotive trim, building products manufacturer, dropped to £41,000 for the year ended April 3 1982. After an exceptional debit last time of £193,000 the pre-tax figure was £701,000.

Turnover was also down at £13.42m, compared with a previous £14.75m and the dividend is cut from 2.45p to 1.4p net per 10p share with a final distribution of 0.4925p. The directors expect, however, to pay no less than 1.7p for the current year.

CH Industrials is giving at the interim stage, the directors say that results for the full year were poor, although the building products division continued to grow and showed record turnover and growth profits.

External rentals in the property sector totalled £266,000, against £218,000, and profits from property development sales contributed £130,000.

The directors explain that the severe reduction in turnover from the cessation of sports car soft top production resulted in losses from the group's auto motive interests.

Rationalisation of these activities around the newly-acquired sunroot businesses has been completed with manufacturing operations located at the Telford factory.

Despite adverse market conditions, the synthetic team finance maintained its market share, but results remained very depressed because of severe price competition, the directors state.

At halfway, profits had fallen

from £135,000 to £16,000 and directors said they believed that although trading results during the second six months would remain depressed, actions taken should ensure a return to substantial profits in 1982-83. They added that the group's financial position remained strong and they continued to engage in acquisition plans.

Reflecting the changing emphasis of group interests, with the building products side accounting for over half group turnover, the structure of CH is being reorganised into three companies which will be formed to encompass building chemical products, property development and investment, and general industrial interests.

Operating profits from continuing operations amounted to £242,000 for the 12 months, but these were offset by the loss from discontinued operations, which represented the costs now eliminated—prior to the transfer of the automotive manufacturing division from Coventry to Telford.

Net profits emerged at £208,000, compared with £584,000, after a tax credit of £67,000 (£117,000 charge) and there was a minority credit of £4,000 (nil).

The attributable balance came through at £123,000, against £215,000 after an extraordinary debit of £88,000 (£269,000), which represented closure costs of the Coventry factory.

The directors point out that the attributable profit to CH from the newly-formed Aston Martin Tickford was £15,000.

At halfway, profits had fallen

which was offset by a loss of the same amount from Aston Martin Lagonda.

• comment

CH Industrials claim to have reached nadir in its fortunes and is now intent on restoring them. Loss-elimination will put £250,000 into pre-tax profits straight away while growth in building products and rental income are expected to boost that total further. The company does not intend to move into property

development long-term; it hopes to sell the properties when the time is right and take in the rental income in the meantime.

Borrowings have increased to support this activity, however, and now stand at £1.55m, having pushed capital gearing to nearly 60 per cent. Provided CH's other sectors begin to perk up, this should not yet be a headache. The shares, unchanged at 19p, have a prospective yield of 13 per cent which shows that CH has a long road ahead of it. Market capitalisation is £2.3m.

Ward's affairs are now in the hands of Mr Philip Baldwin and Mr David Terry of the Midlands practice of Price Waterhouse. Mr Baldwin said trading was continuing and it is hoped to sell the business as a going concern.

"I have had tentative approaches from people who have expressed an interest but I am not ready yet," he said yesterday. "I expect to hold talks with these people next week."

Ward is a private company specialising in distributing bathroom and building equipment and kitchen and general plumbing

losses for 1981-82.

Ward has made a loss on its hardware, clock and watch

distribution business for both 1979 and 1980. No figures have yet been produced for the year ending October 31 1981.

The share price stood at 19p.

Losses before tax for 1979-80 were £140,762 on turnover of £2.74m.

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Stroud Riley profits up 84%

INCLUDING a £200,000 profit on the sale of shares in Held Bros, taxable surplus of worked stockings and knitted fabrics maker Stroud Riley Drummond expanded by 34 per cent from £809,000 to £1.12m for the year ended March 31 1982. Turnover rose to £10.45m, against a previous £7.83m, a rise of 34 per cent.

Profits of half-year were up from £237,000 to £526,000 and the directors said the prospects for the rest of the year were encouraging.

Mr R. V. Stroud, chairman, says that the company not only stemmed substantial losses at recent acquisition J. Hayward and Sons "but turned these to a significant profit".

He adds that the other UK companies, now grouped into two divisions, all contributed satisfactorily during the year.

The overseas division, consisting of a subsidiary in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, is progressing well, Mr Stroud states. Our order book in all divisions is at a very satisfactory level and substantially above that of a year ago."

On capital increased by a one-for-one scrip issue, earnings per 25p share are shown at 10.94p, compared with 6.2p, and the dividend is effectively lifted to 2.25p (1.5p adjusted) with a net final payment of 1.5p.

Interest charge was up from £17,000 to £161,000 and tax was more than doubled at £336,000 (£162,000). After an extraordinary debit of £87,000 (£30,000) the available balance came through at £605,000, against £417,000, of which dividends will absorb £168,000 (£115,000).

CCA pre-tax profit is £976,000 (£266,000).

• comment

Stroud Riley Drummond has produced rather heady results considering the sector in which it is operating. Exports provided most of the turnover gain by doubling to some £4.6m in the year. Elsewhere, rationalisation continues to be the name of the game with the Hayward purchase stripped down and fully integrated into SRD. Return on capital employed is now an admirable 26 per cent against next to nothing just two years ago.

The question is whether SRD can keep up the pace. Its pattern of picking up new assets cheaply and rationalising them is fine, but the company appears not to be overly conservative on depreciation allowances. This perks up pre-tax profits but brings up another question of what happens when old machinery needs to be replaced.

The shares, up 3p to 58p yield, less than 6 per cent and have a historic rating of 7.5.

NO PROBE

The proposed acquisition by the Anglo Building Society of the London and South of England Building Society will not be referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Crown House up 22% and further growth seen

PRE-TAX profits of Crown House have risen by 22.5 per cent from £2.06m to £2.56m for the year ended March 31 1982 on turnover of £14.45m, compared with £13.65m. The result was struck after a loss of £157,000 by the Denbyware group from the date of purchase.

The directors forecast that 1982-83 should see a further advance in profit, dependent on market conditions during the remainder of the year.

The final dividend is kept at 3p not making a move again. 5.25p per 25p share for the year.

Because of a high tax charge the dividend is only marginally increased, but the directors point out that over the last five years, profits available for distribution have amounted to £4.5m, and dividends paid to £3.3m.

In the year 1981-82, improved figures from glassware and engineering contracting in the UK were offset by difficulties in contracting operations in South Africa and Australia, and also the cost of the final period of reorganisation of the electrical

wholesaling division. Turnover and pre-tax profits were split respectively between: electrical and mechanical services £10.2m (£105.98m) and £1.4m (£10.000); tableware (comparative, glassware only) £3.45m (£25.65m) and £515,000 after deduction of assessed interest on purchase price of Denbyware (£100,000); property development and finance £0.75m (£1.7m) and £273,000 (£905,000); employment services £2.05m (£2.65m) and £165,000 (£301,000); and hotel management (eight months to date of sale) nil (£0.55m) and nil (£31,000 loss).

Strategic progress has been made in assimilating Denbyware into the organisation, and the tableware division and the distribution companies in the US have been merged, the directors state. However, current trading conditions for all tableware products are very difficult and competition is intense.

Market conditions are also difficult in electrical wholesaling. Order books in contract engineering are generally satisfactory, and better figures are

looked for both at home and abroad for 1982-83.

There has been no easing in market conditions for Senior Secretaries, but following the acquisition of International Secretaries improved profits are expected.

The current year will see the sale of one property development and a better result should be shown than that achieved in 1981-82.

The non-deductibility of overseas losses has meant a tax charge of £1.29m for the year. Previously, there was a credit of £3.65m which reflected the release of a £4.27m provision no longer required for stock appreciation relief.

After minority profits of £98,000 (£81,000 losses) and extraordinary credit of £194,000 (£435,000), the net attributable surplus was well down from £6.24m to £1.86m. Preference and ordinary dividends again absorb £1.21m.

Stated earnings per share were 5.1p, compared with 25.7p or 5.8p excluding the tax pro-

tection no longer required.

Group net assets at the year end amounted to £19.6m (£19.5m), while net cash balances decreased from £5.3m to £3.2m. During the year £4m was expended on acquisitions (mainly 70 per cent of Denbyware) and capital expenditure came to £2.3m (£1.5m).

• comment

In best conglomerate tradition (even if it is on a small scale) Crown House's results are struck after the impact of wide and unconnected influences. Perhaps the only meaningful line is the pre-tax level: where a 5.5 per cent improvement represents a modest step towards the £4m of two years ago. More is promised for this year though Crown is unlikely to get close to its peak. The latest figures should be viewed in the context of a £0.9m write-off against an Egyptian contract in the comparable period. But then 1982 has had its own batch of particular contracting problems; losses in South Africa

and Australia and substantial reorganisation costs at Best and May.

South Africa can be brought round but less obvious is the future for Australia while B and M could be close to breaking even this year. Elsewhere the other feature of the division breakdown must be the rapid, if only partial, recovery at glassware. Yet the underlying market for tableware is no stronger, and perhaps even weaker, than last year, so it would be wrong to expect another large step forward in 1982-83. Property development by the nature of its limited size puts in lump profits. Last year there were no development completions and this £165,000 profit is solely a recovery of costs following a joint venture deal on a Bramley site.

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• Profits double to £3.2 million.

• Total dividend increased to 7.0p per share (1981-6.4p).

• One for one capitalisation issue.

• Financial resources remain healthy.

"There are grounds for confidence in the outcome of the current year."

Copies of the Annual Report may be obtained from The Secretary, Brown & Tawse PLC, P.O. Box 159, St. Leonards Street, London E3 3QJ.

BROWN & TAWSE

STEEL AND TUBE STOCKHOLDERS AND PROCESSORS

Equitable Life growth midway

GOOD NEW business results are reported for the first half of this year by the Equitable Life Assurance Society, thanks to a buoyant pensions sector. New annual premiums advanced by one-fifth from £21.2m to £25.8m, while single premiums were 10 per cent higher at £9.6m against £8.7m.

The company maintained its position as a leader in the self-employed pensions market with a 22 per cent rise in annual premiums of this type of pension, from £12.5m to £15.5m.

It also recorded a 31 per cent increase in annual premiums on executive pension contracts from £3.57m to £4.5m.

As a result of a sales drive in this sector.

The surprising feature in the results was the strength of Equitable's group pension business, where new annual premiums rose 18 per cent from £12.7m to £14.4m. This in contrast to the general performance of those life companies heavily involved in the group pensions market, which are reporting lower pensions new business because of the effects of the recession. The society's newly launched money purchase plan has been favourably received.

This success in group pensions business was also reflected in

Control Securities tops £1m mark for first time

FOR THE first time in its history, profits of property and concern, Control Securities, have exceeded the £1m mark. Pre-tax profits were struck after interest payable of £313,134 (£305,319) and share of an associate, Cefm Estates, whose profit rose from £670 to £551,784 on property acquisitions and disposals made during the year.

Tax took £209,240 (£129,702) and after extraordinary debts of £2,131 (£693) and minorities, net available profits were up from £495,458 to £789,983. Dividends absorb £461,285 (£307,576).

The board feels sure that in the current year, the company will be able to maintain its profit record in spite of the still difficult economic climate.

At halfway, when reporting taxable figures ahead from £0.28m to £0.54m, the board said it believed that profits for the second six months would be in line with those of the first half.

In line with forecast, a final dividend of 1.575p is recommended, making a total for the year of 2.75625p net after adjusting for the one-for-three scrip issue, compared with an adjusted 2.12p.

Stated earnings per 10p share were up from 3.4p to 4.73p basic, and from 2.8p to 4.31p fully diluted.

Turnover for the year was little changed at £2.55m.

Scan Data back in black

For the half year ended May 31 1982, Scan Data International, computer, supply and maintenance concern, turned in profits of £76,934 on a turnover of £19.4m.

For the comparative period the company, on a turnover of £15.5m, incurred losses of £140,864, but there were after development expenditure on micro-computer systems of £198,986.

The directors say the substantial proportion of this expenditure was completed in 1981 and that the effects were beginning to be reflected in the sales

growth of these products during the six months.

Order books for both Texas Instruments and onyx based products are at record levels. The board expects to continue the significant growth in level of sales and to move further towards margins, which were upped to 20 per cent by 1980, during the second half of the year.

By virtue of tax losses and allowances available it is not expected that there will be any liability to corporation tax on the profit for the first half.

Details of this facility will be circulated to shareholders together with the annual financial statements and formal approval will be requested at the Annual General Meeting in 1983.

THE TRING HALL

USM INDEX

127.4 (-0.7)

Close of business 19/7/82

Tel: 01-638 1591

BASE DATE 10/11/80 100

LADBROKE INDEX

565.570 (+10)

Dewhurst and Partner profit midway

A PRE-TAX profit of £24,240 is reported by Dewhurst and Partners for the half-year ended March 28 1982, compared with losses of £343,800 for the same period last year. A big improvement is forecast for the year.

An 0.15p net interim dividend per 10p share will be paid. There was no interim last year while a final of 0.15p was paid. For the year 1981-81 losses were £337,000.

The company manufactures automatic electrical control

equipment. Turnover improved slightly from £1.82m to £1.85m, while earnings per share were reported as 0.24p (4.55p loss).

Pre-tax profits were made up of: Dewhurst and Partner losses £19,780 (£37,970 loss); Dupar Pelapone profits £2,810 (£279,280 loss); and Dupar Canada profits £41,210 (£18,260).

The company says Dupar Pelapone will generate a modest profit for the full year and Dupar Canada an increased profit over

last year despite more difficult trading conditions in North America.

It says Dewhurst and Partners is still experiencing disappointing levels of demand, although there has been some improvement, which should yield marginal profitability in the second half.

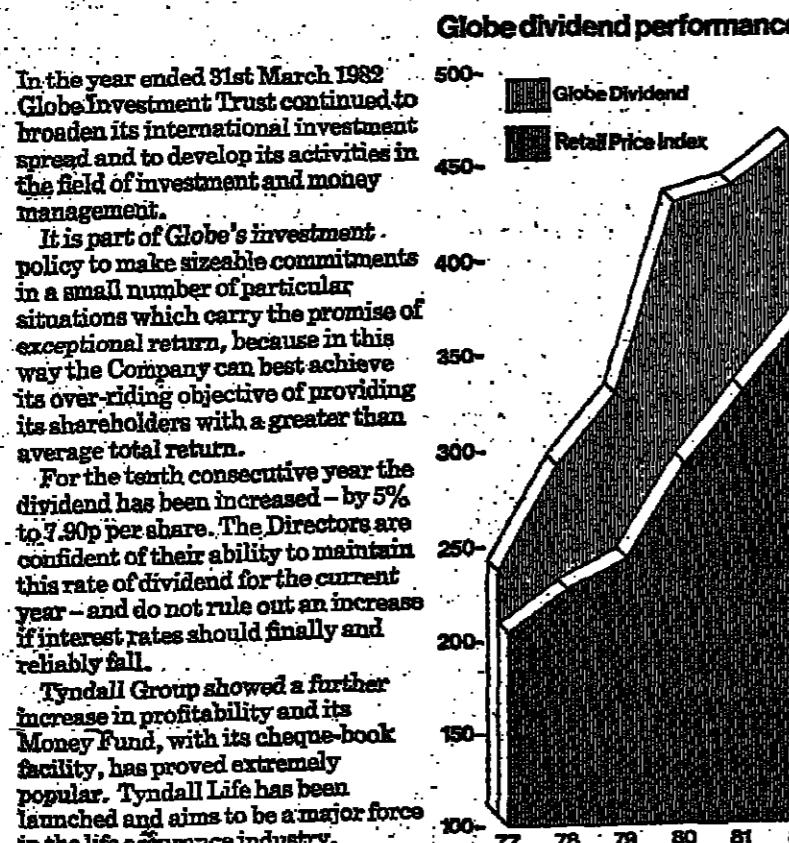
The company adds that the group will, therefore, show a marked improvement for the full year over last year's figures.

GLOBE INVESTMENT TRUST

"There is a whole world wherein we are charged to find the most rewarding investments for you."

The Hon. Edward D. G. Davies,
Governor, Globe Investment Trust P.L.C.

Globe dividend performance



To: Globe Investment Trust P.L.C.,
FREEPOST, London WC1R 3BR
Telephone: 01-835 7782
Please send me your 1982 Report.
Name _____
Address _____
Post code _____

AN ELECTRA HOUSE COMPANY

COOPER BASIN LIQUIDS PROJECT

A\$100,000,000

MULTI-CURRENCY

PROJECT FINANCE FACILITIES

LEAD MANAGERS

THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION

MARINE MIDLAND BANK, N.A.

FUNDS PROVIDED BY

THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION — SINGAPORE A.C.U.

MARINE MIDLAND BANK, N.A.

THE COMMERCIAL BANK OF AUSTRALIA LIMITED

AUSTRALIAN INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

MINING NEWS

Barlow Rand golds earn more in June quarter

BY KENNETH MARSTON, MINING EDITOR

DESPITE A lower average gold price in terms of US dollars during the June quarter, the South African mines in the South African group have increased net profits for the period, but special factors are involved.

For one thing the weakness of the rand against the dollar has resulted in Harmony and Blyvoor receiving a slightly higher price in terms of rands and has cushioned the fall in the cases of the marginal Durban Deep and East Rand Proprietary Mines (ERPM).

More important, as far as Harmony and Blyvoor are concerned, has been the sharp fall in tax liability during the latest quarter. In the previous

three months the tax bill was enlarged by the retrospective effects of the increase announced in the South African budget earlier this year.

Things are now back to normal and, in addition, the mines have benefited from allowances for capital expenditure which has resulted in Harmony escaping liability for mining tax and State's share of profit. The mine has also increased gold production thanks to a higher mill grade.

Blyvoor's production, on the other hand, has dropped in line with a fall in grade which reflects the progressive decrease in tonnage mined from the West Driefontein area. The mine has

also suffered a sizeable rise in cost per tonne of ore milled.

State aid has come to the rescue of Durban Deep and ERPM. The former company was still in profit before the aid but the latter made another loss, albeit reduced from that of the March quarter because of a better mill grade which led to increased gold production.

The latest quarterly profits are compared in the following table.

June March Dec.
Rands Rands Rands
qr qr qr
Blyvoor (d) 14,233 13,824 17,453
Durban Deep 2,556 2,556 2,556
East Rand P.M. 2,477 2,222 2,307
Harmony 27,220 21,722 24,902
*After receipt of State assistance,
+ Restated.

Zimbabwe mines seek government aid

NEARLY 2000 Zimbabwean miners have been retrenched in recent months owing to the world recession which has led to the closure of 177 mines, reports Tony Hawkins from Harare.

Announcing this in Harare, the Minister of Mines, Mr. Maurice Nyagumbo said that 163 small gold mines employing 1,880 workers had been closed and along with 14 base metal properties employing 120 people.

OCEAN WILSONS (HOLDINGS) PLC

SALIENT POINTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN'S REVIEW

Profits and Dividends

Profits before taxation, for the year ended 31st December, 1981 are £3,522,000 compared with £3,512,000 for the previous eleven month period and after taxation are £1,710,000 compared with £1,231,000. The Directors have recommended the payment of a final dividend of 2.20p per share which, together with the interim dividend of 0.75p already paid, makes a total for the year of 2.95p per share for the year compared with 2.60p for the previous period (an increase of 13 per cent).

Investments and Net Assets

The Listed investment portfolio was valued on 31st December, 1981 at £4,632,000, a surplus over cost of £2,510,000. A later valuation made 30th June, 1982 showed figures of £4,325,000 and £2,533,000.

Attributable net assets for each 20p share at book values and including the surplus on listed investments, was 64.65p per share of which 26.02p is situated in the United Kingdom and 38.63p in Brazil. The current cost accounts disclose Net Assets of 116.25p per share of which 90.27p is in Brazil.

Brazil

The operations of the Brazilian subsidiaries have again shown a reasonable increase despite the recession being experienced in Brazil. Profits before taxation have risen by 85.75 per cent in Cruzeiro terms, almost keeping pace with internal inflation of 95.2 per cent but exceeding the fall in the Sterling/Cruzeiro exchange rate of 56.5 per cent. The recession has, however, had a drastic effect on the results of the associated companies which show a trading loss of £295,000 for the year compared with a profit for the previous period of £105,000. Certain loss-making activities have now been discontinued and steps taken to minimise costs at all other centres of operation.

Future Prospects

1982 is a very challenging period for Brazil, both economically and politically. However, the development of the country's immense resources now under way should permit in two to three years' time the resumption of growth in the Brazilian economy, experienced before the crisis induced by the increase in oil prices. So far as our Group is concerned, our operations should benefit from the services which we are able to supply to assist the high volume of export and other trading activities.

COMPARATIVE STATEMENT

	Year 31.12.1981	11 months 31.12.1980
	£'000	£'000
Profits and Dividends	546,798	238,185
Group Turnover	546,798	238,185
Profit before Taxation	3,522	3,312
Taxation United Kingdom	178	328
Overseas	1,634	1,652
Group Profit after Taxation	1,710	1,231
Dividends	751	688
Amount Retained	929	643
Earnings per Share	6.46p	5.02p
Dividends per Share	2.95p	2.60p
Group Net Assets		
Situated in United Kingdom at book value	4,078	3,871
Surplus of market value over book value of listed investments	2,810	3,127
	6,888	6,998
Situated in Brazil at book value	10,227	9,326
	£17,115	£16,324

The Annual General Meeting will be held at Hall 19, Winchester House, 100 Old Broad Street, London EC2 on Wednesday, 11th August, 1982 at 12 noon.

Interest rates hit A. McAlpine

THE South African coal mining company Alfred McAlpine, which is 70 per cent-owned by the UK Marchiel group, was hit by higher interest charges in the six months to April 30, reports our Johannesburg correspondent. The interim dividend, however, is maintained at 8 cents (4p).

Turnover in the first half was R13m (£6.53m) from R8.2m in the same period of the previous year, but the increased interest charges resulted in pre-tax profits falling to R1.51m. Other adverse factors included major plant recommissioning and the cost of setting up new open-cast operations.

Good progress has been made with the export expansion programme at the Optimum Colliery and McAlpine has been granted an annual coal export allocation of 500,000 tonnes as part of phase 4a of the Richards Bay development project. Sales under this allocation are unlikely to start until 1990 at the earliest.

Australia £100m bulldog bond issue

AUSTRALIA HAS become the latest borrower in the bulldog bond market—the domestic UK sector for foreign entities. The Commonwealth of Australia yesterday launched a £100m public 28-year partly paid issue through S. G. Warburg and five other managers.

The yield will be fixed at 3.00 per cent on Wednesday and will provide a margin of 1 per cent above the gross redemption yield on the 13 per cent Treasury Stock 2004-08. Investors will paid £20 per cent on £100 of stock and the balance on October 28.

If the Australian paper had been priced yesterday it would have provided a yield of 13.77 per cent. Brokers to the issue are Rowe and Pitman, Phillips and Drew and R. Nixon and Co.

The last bulldog bond was a £100m issue for New Zealand, also led by Warburg. This issue was 22 per cent partly paid and was priced to provide a spread of 75 basis points over the mean of the gross redemption yields of the 13 per cent Exchequer Stock 1987 and the 12 per cent Treasury Stock 1987.

SGH/TANKS

Acceptances to the offer by Societe Generale Holdings SA (SGH) for all the issued 9 per cent cumulative redeemable preference shares of Tanks have been received in respect of over 90 per cent of the preference shares.

The following companies have notified dates of board meetings to the Stock Exchange. Such meetings are usually held on the last day of the month preceding dividends. Official indications are available as to whether the dividends are interim or final and the sub-divisions shown below are based mainly on last year's timetable.

Interims—Leda Investment Trust, Metcalf Investment Trust, Finlays—Affiliated Colloids, Black Arrow, Fuller Smith and Turner, Hogg Robinson, Motors Investment Trust, R.F.D., Royal Metal Finishing, Rothmans International, Shamed Refreshment Houses.

Finals—Leda Investment Trust, Metcalf Investment Trust, Finlays—Affiliated Colloids, Black Arrow, Fuller Smith and Turner, Hogg Robinson, Motors Investment Trust, R.F.D., Royal Metal Finishing, Rothmans International, Shamed Refreshment Houses.

FUTURE DATES

Interims—Crown Securities Ltd., Hong Kong and Shanghai Bnk., Aug 22.

Joustra (Thomas) Ltd., Aug 24.

Lex Service, July 30.

Royal Insurance, Aug 16.

Woolworths (P. W.) Ltd., Aug 11.

Aitken Hume, July 21.

Arlington Motor, July 26.

Brasway, July 28.

Collection Industries, July 22.

Dom, July 23.

McDonalds, July 24.

Sainsbury, July 29.

Three-year summary of results.

Year ended	Total Income £'000	Ordinary Shares per share	Gross Assets (less current liabilities) £'000	Net Asset Value per Ordinary share
31st March 1980	2,730	5.21p	5.20p	45,767 141.6p
1981	2,800	5.33p	5.30p	63,918 199.9p
1982	3,049	5.67p	5.65p	63,593 198.9p

THE LONDON AND PROVINCIAL TRUST PLC

Investment Manager—Robert Fleming Investment Management Limited

Secretary—Robert Fleming Services Limited

Three-year summary of results

In his statement, the Chairman LORD WYFOLD said that the Directors and their advisers are studying the reorganisation of the Company into one or more unit trusts and that they hope to send Shareholders specific proposals in the near future. Should the Company continue as a general investment trust, Shareholders can expect dividends totalling not less than 5.65p per Ordinary Share.

Copies of the Accounts are available from the Registrars, Bourne House, 34 Beckenham Road, Beckenham, Kent BR3 4TU.

Equity and Law acquires Belgian company for £4m

Equity and Law Life Assurance, Equity and Law commenced its European operations by acquiring the Belgian insurance company L'Union Européenne in a cash transaction worth around £5m. This will be the society's first venture into Belgium.

L'Union Européenne operates a life assurance company, a general insurance company and a small savings bank. Its total premium income in 1981 was in excess of £100m (£5.5m). Its total assets at the end of 1981 amounted to around £100m (£22m).

Equity and Law's life assurance operations is situated in Brussels. But last year around the birth of its new business arose from European operations.

The acquisition of L'Union Européenne will involve Equity and Law in the direct underwriting of general insurance business for the first time in the UK. The company has "confirmed" its entry into the group pension market. This was followed by its entry into the German market in 1974 when it opened a branch in Wiesbaden.

The company has a policy of expanding its European operations as and when opportunities arise, but still regards the UK as its main area of growth.

S & W Berisford sugar bid may face new Monopolies probe

BY M. H. HERMANN, LEGAL CORRESPONDENT

A NEW reference to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission of takeover attempts by S. and W. Berisford, the UK commodity group, for British Sugar Corporation, could take place following the recent bid by Berisford for the sugar group.

"It is either absorption or independence," said Mr. John Beckett, British Sugar's chief executive, after his group made dramatic new moves in London and Luxembourg.

British Sugar yesterday lodged a new submission with the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) asking for a new reference of the takeover bid to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. The group has been told that the OFT is aware of the urgency of the matter.

The European Commission is already studying the takeover bid.

Mr. Beckett said that the main new argument against the merger is that the combined enterprise would have a debt/equity ratio of two to one. This would,

in his view, work against the public interest as any responsible board would have to try to reduce the indebtedness radically in the shortest time possible.

This could hardly be done, in his view, without causing a restriction in the Berisford branch trading and without endangering the availability of funds for capital equipment and for payments to farmers in the British Sugar branch of the combined enterprise.

He argues that the conclusions of the first report by the Commission no longer hold because since that report the profitability and market share of British Sugar increased substantially.

This would also require a more substantial representation of British Sugar on the main board of the combined enterprise which was envisaged by the Commission.

British Sugar's lawyers were yesterday lodging with the registry of the European Court

in Luxembourg an appeal against the Commission's decision last Friday that there was no need for a temporary measure of protection, which would have frozen a purchase of a crucial 10.5 per cent holding in British Sugar which is owned by Rank Hovis McDougall.

Berisford is buying that stake of 40.02 per cent in the sugar group.

The European Court will dispose in a few days but a preliminary order of protection could be made by its president who is usually available for urgent decisions during the court's long summer holiday.

The Commission is likely to oppose the application in the first instance on procedural grounds, claiming that it is inadmissible as there is no formal decision yet.

On the other hand, the Commission may be tempted to exploit the opportunity for gaining from the court a ruling which would have the indirect effect of increasing its power to make preliminary orders of protection.

British Sugar's lawyers were given a preliminary order of protection.

Mr. David Sainsbury has reduced his beneficial holding in J. Sainsbury by 250,000 shares and his non-beneficial holding by 10,000 shares.

Mr. Timothy Sainsbury has reduced his beneficial holding by 200,000 shares and his non-beneficial holding by 180,000 shares.

Mr. David Sainsbury has reduced his beneficial holding by 202,000 shares.

The sales have resulted in substantial changes to certain shares which now stand at: Mr. Simon Sainsbury 13 per cent; Vanheimer Trustee 10 per cent; Mr. W. M. Pybus 9 per cent.

J. SAINSBURY

Sir John Sainsbury has reduced his beneficial holdings in J. Sainsbury by 250,000 shares and his non-beneficial holding by 10,000 shares.

This Prospectus includes information given in compliance with the Regulations of the Council of The Stock Exchange in London for the purpose of giving information to the public with regard to the Stock to be issued by the Commonwealth of Australia ("Australia"). Australia has taken all reasonable care to ensure that the facts stated herein are true and accurate in all material respects and that there are no other material facts the omission of which would make misleading any statement herein whether of fact or of opinion. Australia accepts responsibility accordingly.



Dated 20th July, 1982

Commonwealth of Australia

Issue on a yield basis of

£100,000,000 Loan Stock 2010

payable as to £20 per cent. on application
and as to the balance by 28th October, 1982
with interest payable half yearly on 28th July and 28th January

The Issue has been underwritten by

S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd.

County Bank Limited

Kleinwort, Benson Limited

J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited

Hill Samuel & Co. Limited

Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited

EXCHANGE
Application has been made to the Council of The Stock Exchange in London for the £100,000,000 Loan Stock 2010 (the "Stock") to be admitted to the Official List for quotation in the Gilt-edged market. The Stock, when listed, will be an investment falling within Part II of the First Schedule to the Trustee Investments Act 1961.

Renounceable allotment letters (partly paid) in respect of the Stock will be despatched not later than Wednesday, 20th July, 1982. A certificate in respect of the Stock held by a holder of Stock will be despatched to, or at the direction of, that holder on 19th November, 1982 provided the balance of the money payable thereon has been duly paid.

PROCEDURE FOR APPLICATION

Each application for Stock must be made in the form of the application form provided herewith and must be lodged with Lloyds Bank Plc, Issue Section, 111 Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1AU (the "Receiving Bank") not later than 10.00 a.m. on Thursday, 22nd July, 1982 and must comply with the provisions of "Terms of Payment in Respect of Applications" below.

Applications for Stock must be for a minimum of £100 principal amount of Stock and thereafter for the following multiples of Stock:

Amount of Stock applied for	Multiple
£1,000 or less	£100
£1,000 to £10,000	£1,000
£10,000 to £50,000	£5,000
£50,000 or greater	£25,000

S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., on behalf of Australia, reserves the right to reject any application and to accept any application in part only. If any application is not accepted the relevant application form and the amount paid thereon will be returned by post at the risk of the person submitting the application and, if any application is accepted for a smaller amount of Stock than that applied for, the balance of the amount paid on application will be so returned.

S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., on behalf of Australia, will announce the date of allotment by 10.00 a.m. on Friday, 23rd July, 1982. It is expected that confirmation of allotments will be despatched on that day. Acceptances of applications for Stock will be conditional (*inter alia*) upon the Council of The Stock Exchange admitting the Stock to the Official List on or before Wednesday, 28th July, 1982 and the rate of interest on, and issue price of, the Stock being approved by the Treasurer of Australia (see "General Information - Underwriting Arrangements" below).

THE APPLICATION LIST WILL OPEN AT 10.00 A.M. ON THURSDAY, 22nd JULY, 1982 AND CLOSE LATER ON THE SAME DAY.

TERMS OF PAYMENT IN RESPECT OF APPLICATIONS

Each application form must be accompanied by a cheque made payable to "Lloyds Bank Plc" and crossed "Australia Loan", representing payment at the rate of 20 per cent. of the principal amount of Stock applied for. Such cheques must be drawn on a bank in the United Kingdom or the Channel Islands or on a bank which is either a member of the London or Scottish Clearing Houses or which has arranged for its cheques to be cleared through the facilities provided for the members of those Clearing Houses so as to be cleared not later than 10.00 a.m. (London time) on Wednesday, 26th July, 1982.

S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., on behalf of Australia, reserves the right to instruct the Receiving Bank to retain the relevant allotment letters and cheques for surplus application money (if any) pending clearance of applicants' remittances.

The balance of the amount payable on the Stock allotted must be paid to us to be cleared on or before Thursday, 28th October, 1982. Any amount paid in advance of its due date shall not bear interest or be entitled to any other payment.

Failure to pay the balance on any Stock when due will render all amounts previously paid liable to forfeiture and the allotment liable to cancellation. Interest at the rate of two per cent. above the Base Rate for the time being of the Receiving Bank may be charged on such balance if accepted after its due date. Australia further reserves the right, in default of payment of such amount, to sell any such Stock fully paid for its own account.

DELIVERY

Renounceable allotment letters (partly paid) in respect of Stock allotted will be despatched not later than Wednesday, 26th July, 1982 to, and by first class post at the risk of, the person submitting the application in accordance with the instructions set out on the application form.

Allotment letters may be split up to 3.00 p.m. (London time) on 26th October, 1982 in accordance with the instructions contained therein into denominations or multiples of £100 principal amount of Stock.

Unless a duly renounced fully paid allotment letter with the registration application form duly completed is received by the Receiving Bank on or before Thursday, 28th October, 1982 the Stock represented by such allotment letter will be registered in the name of the original allottee and thereafter Stock will be transferable only by instrument of transfer.

Stock certificates will be despatched on 19th November, 1982 at the risk of holders of Stock provided the balance of the money payable on the Stock held by the holder to whom the Stock certificates are to be despatched has been duly paid. After that date allotment letters will cease to be valid for any purpose.

INFORMATION RELATING TO THE ISSUE

The issue of the Stock was authorised by the Governor-General of Australia acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council on 19th May, 1982, and the Stock will be constituted by a Deed Poll to be dated 28th July, 1982, executed by Australia and deposited with Lloyds Bank Plc, and holders of Stock will be deemed to have notice of and will be bound by its terms.

Form and Status

The Stock will be in registered form and transferable in multiples of one penny by instrument in writing in the same manner as if the Stock were a security to which Section 1 of the Stock Transfer Act 1963 applied.

The Stock will constitute a direct, unconditional and general obligation of Australia and the full faith and credit of Australia will be pledged for the due and punctual payment of the principal and of interest on the Stock and for the due and timely performance of all obligations of Australia with respect thereto.

The Stock will be unsecured and will rank pari passu with all other unsecured indebtedness (as that term will be defined in the said Deed Poll) of Australia from time to time outstanding.

Redemption

Australia will redeem the Stock at par on 28th July, 2010.

Australia will be able at any time to purchase Stock in the open market at any price or by private agreement at a price (exclusive of accrued interest and expenses) not exceeding 115 per cent. of the middle market quotation for the

GENERAL INFORMATION

Underwriting Arrangements

By an Underwriting Agreement dated 19th July, 1982, S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., County Bank Limited, Hill Samuel & Co. Limited, Kleinwort, Benson Limited, Morgan Grenfell & Co. Limited and J. Henry Schroder Wagg & Co. Limited (the "Underwriters") have agreed with Australia to underwrite the issue of the Stock. The Underwriting Agreement is subject to certain conditions and S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., on behalf of the Underwriters, may in certain circumstances terminate the Underwriting Agreement. If the Underwriting Agreement is so terminated or the Underwriting Agreement does not become unconditional, acceptances of applications for the Stock will become void.

Australia has agreed to pay to the Underwriters commissions aggregating £25 per £100 of Stock for their services as managers and underwriters of the issue out of which will be paid commissions to the brokers to the issue (Rowe & Pitman, Phillips & Drew and R. Nixon & Co. Ltd.) and certain other persons who have accepted sub-underwriting participations in respect of the issue of the Stock. Australia will also pay brokerage of 12½p per £100 of Stock to recognised Banks or Stockbrokers on allotments made in respect of applications on form bearing their stamp; this commission will not, however, be paid in respect of any allotment which arises out of an underwriting commitment. The expression "recognised Bank or Stockbroker" will mean an organisation which is a recognised bank for the purposes of the Banking Act 1979 and any firm of stockbrokers which is a member of The Stock Exchange and such other brokers or stockbrokers as S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd. shall at its absolute discretion determine for the purpose of the issue. The total expenses of the issue (including the above-mentioned commissions but excluding brokerage) are estimated to amount to about £1,350,000 and are payable by Australia.

Documents for Inspection

Copies of the following documents will be available for inspection at the offices of Slaughter & May, 35 Newgate Street, London EC2V 5DB during normal business hours until 3rd August, 1982:

(1) The Underwriting Agreement referred to above;

- (ii) a draft, subject to modification, of the Deed Poll referred to above; and
- (iii) extracts from the following statutes and other documents relating to the issue of the Stock: Australian Constitution, Financial Agreement, Financial Agreement Validation Act 1929, Financial Agreement Act 1928, Financial Agreement Act 1976, Standing Resolution (1956) by the Australian Loan Council, Loans Securities Act 1919, Acts Interpretation Act 1901, State Grants (Tertiary Education Assistance) Act 1981, Housing Assistance Act 1981 and a certified copy of a Federal Executive Council Minute containing recommendations approved on Wednesday, 19th May, 1982 by the Governor-General of Australia acting with the advice of the Federal Executive Council.

General

No person is authorised to give any information or to make any representation not contained in this Prospectus and any information or representation not contained herein must not be relied upon as having been authorised by Australia or by any of the Underwriters. This Prospectus does not constitute an offer to sell or solicitation of an offer to buy the Stock in any jurisdiction to any person to whom it is unlawful to make such an offer or solicitation in such jurisdiction.

Copies of the Prospectus and application form may be obtained from:

- The office of the Australian High Commission, Australia House, The Strand, London WC2A 4LA.
- S. G. Warburg & Co. Ltd., 30 Gresham Street, London EC2P 2EB.
- Rowe & Pitman, City-Gate House, 39-45 Finsbury Square, London EC2A 1JA.
- Phillips & Drew, Lea House, London Wall, London EC2N 2AP.
- R. Nixon & Co. 25 Austin Friars, London EC2N 2FB.
- Lloyds Bank Plc, Issue Section, 111 Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1AU.
- Lloyds Bank Plc, 131 George Street, Edinburgh EH2 4LQ.

APPLICATION FORM

The application list will open at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday, 22nd July, 1982, and close later on the same day.

This form must be lodged with Lloyds Bank Plc, Issue Section, 111 Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1AU.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

ISSUE ON A YIELD BASIS OF £100,000,000 LOAN STOCK 2010

Payable as follows: On application, £20 per cent. On or before 28th October, 1982, the balance of the issue price

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY
1. Acceptance No.
2. Amount of Stock accepted
3. Amount received on application
4. Amount payable on Stock accepted
5. Amount returned
6. Balance payable
7. A/L No.
8. Cheque No.

To: Lloyds Bank Plc, Issue Section, 111 Old Broad Street, London EC2N 1AU.

In accordance with the terms of the Prospectus dated 20th July, 1982, I/we request you to allot to me/us Stock as set out below:

Principal amount of the Stock applied for	Amount enclosed at £20 per cent. of the principal amount applied for
£	£

I/we enclose a cheque* in the amount set out in the right hand box above.

I/we undertake to accept the amount of Stock applied for or any lesser amount that may be allotted in respect of this application and to pay for the same in conformity with the terms of the said Prospectus.

I/we request that any letter or allotment in respect of the Stock allotted to me/us be sent to me/us by first class post at my/our risk at the address shown below. I/we agree that this application shall be irrevocable. I/we understand that the completion and delivery of this form accompanied by my/our cheque constitutes a representation that my/our cheque will be honoured on first presentation. I/we hereby engage to pay the balance payable on the Stock by Thursday, 28th October, 1982 on any allotment made to me/us in respect of this application and I/we understand that failure to pay such balance by the due date will render the amount previously paid liable to forfeiture and the allotment liable to cancellation and that interest at the rate of two per cent. above the Base Rate for the time being of Lloyds Bank Plc may be charged on such balance if accepted after its due date and that Australia may, without prejudice to any other rights, in default of payment, sell the Stock fully paid for its own account.

I/we hereby request that any allotment of Stock to me/us be evidenced by an allotment letter addressed to me/us and sent by post at my/our risk to me/us at the first address shown below.

*A separate cheque must accompany each application form. Cheques should be made payable to "Lloyds Bank Plc" and crossed "Australia Loan".

Date: _____ 1982.

(1) Usual Signature

In the case of a corporation, the common seal must be affixed or this form signed by a duly authorised officer who must state his capacity.

Forenames: _____

Surname: _____
(also state designation: Mr., Mrs., Miss or title)

Address in full: _____

(3) Usual Signature

Forenames: _____

Surname: _____
(also state designation: Mr., Mrs., Miss or title)

Address in full: _____

(4) Usual Signature

Forenames: _____

Surname: _____
(also state designation: Mr., Mrs., Miss or title)

Address in full: _____

Stamp of bank or
Broker claiming brokerage
(if any)

COMMODITIES AND AGRICULTURE

Cocoa values at 12-month low

By Richard Mooney

RISING STERLING and disappointment at the outcome of last week's council meeting of the International Cocoa Organisation (ICCO) depressed values on the London cocoa futures market yesterday.

These factors were enough to outweigh the announcement of record West German second quarter cocoa bean grindings and push the September position £30 lower at £266.50 a tonne—the lowest level since June 1981.

The ICCO talks in London were adjourned on Friday night without reaching a decision on measures to boost depressed prices.

Producers had proposed using a £50m loan secured by the organisation recently to fund the purchase of 150,000 tonnes of cocoa on deferred payment terms, lifting the buffer stock to the trigger level of 250,000 tonnes, at which export quotas could be introduced. Used for direct buying the money would yield less than 50,000 tonnes of cocoa at current prices.

But the consumers said they had not been given sufficient time to study this proposal, which would have meant the immediate purchase of 60,000 tonnes from the four main producers, with another 90,000 to follow later.

ember 27.

buffer stock manager should have completed on the costs of the scheme.

West German April-June grindings totalled 38,850 tonnes, according to the National Confectionery Association.

Sarawak pepper exports rise

KUALA LUMPUR — Pepper exports from the East Malaysian state of Sarawak rose to 1,710 tonnes in January from 1,216 tonnes in December, but were lower than 2,654 tonnes in January 1981, the Pepper Marketing Board said.

In January, Singapore took 1,148 tonnes, Japan 333, Taiwan 109 and other countries 122 tonnes.

Reuter.

LONDON OIL SPOT PRICES

Month	Latest			Change ↑ or ↓
	Yester'day's close	+ or -	Business Done	
CRUDE OIL-FOB (\$ per barrel)				
Arabian Light.....	51.50-52.10	-0.45		
Iranian Light.....	51.50-52.00	-0.25		
Arabian Heavy.....	53.00-53.80	-0.07		
North Sea (Forrest).....	55.25-55.80	-0.14		
African (Bonny U/H).....	54.00-53.80	-0.30		
PRODUCTS—North West Europe				
Premium gasoline.....	240.54-545	+0.5		
Gas oil.....	265.27-576	+5.0		
Heavy fuel oil.....	165.165	+2.0		
Turnover: 2,678 (2,795), lots of 100 tonnes.				

GOLD MARKETS

Gold rose \$24 an ounce from Friday's close in the London bullion market yesterday to finish at \$347.348. It opened at \$352.352 and rose to a high of \$352.353, reflecting a weaker dollar and lower U.S. interest rates. However the firmer trend was not maintained and the metal touched a low of \$346.346 before closing slightly above this level.

In Frankfurt the 121 kilo bar was fixed at DM 27,860 per kilo (\$351.94 per ounce) against DM 27,790 (\$346.72) previously and closed at \$348.350 from \$346.347.

In Paris the 121 kilo bar was fixed at FF 77,000 per kilo (\$348.06 per ounce) in the afternoon compared with FF 76,500

Whaling ban move hits snag

By Nancy OUNNIE

THE DRIVE towards a ban on commercial whaling could be losing some steam as 38 national delegations attending the annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission in Brighton face the possibility that a moratorium might lead to a walk-out by whaling suit, Mr Harvey said.

The Commission fears a "downing effect" with one nation cutting back on funding and other nations following suit, Mr Harvey said.

Meeting yesterday, the IWC technical committee discussed the possibility of compromise and putting off the vote— if there is to be one— until the end of the week, according to Mr Martin Harvey, Executive Officer of the Commission.

However, if the issue does come to vote, it is likely to pass, said Mr Harvey. The Commission has two new members now, Senegal and Belize, both believed to be heading for the anti-whaling camp, and they, along with traditional opponents plus other new members who oppose the practice could well make up the three-quarters vote needed to pass the ban.

One factor delaying final consideration of the ban, said Mr Harvey, is funding for whaling research, which is supposed to go forward if a ban is approved. In the past, financing has been mostly provided by the whaling

nations, which are unlikely to continue to provide funds in the event of a ban.

The Commission fears a "downing effect" with one nation cutting back on funding and other nations following suit, Mr Harvey said.

None of the ban's proponents has offered a major increase in research or research financing. In fact, the U.S. which has said it would consider economic sanctions if Japan ignores a ban, has actually cut its gray whale research.

At the world's largest whaling nation, Japan is bitterly opposed to the moratorium and the ban's proponents are seriously worried about the prospect of Japan leaving the commission, just as it is becoming an effective conservation organisation.

British conservationist Joanna Gordon Clark has said that the loss of Japan would seriously weaken the IWC and has advocated allowing Japan some sperm whales and minke.

Five motions are now awaiting consideration. The U.S. has proposed an indefinite moratorium; British and Australia, a cessation; France, a suspension with no specified time limit; and Seychelles, a

Support buying of London tin

By Our Commodities Staff

SHARPLY FALLING prices prompted the International Tin Agreement buffer stock manager to buy tin on the London Metal Exchange yesterday for the first time in some months. While the London market has remained relatively steady, his efforts have been devoted to preventing the Penang price falling below the ITC "floor" level of 29.15 Malaysian ringgit per picul.

But the strength of sterling started a downturn yesterday that was fuel by charlist selling and the cash price had fallen by more than £200 a tonne before the buffer stock manager intervened.

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The word monsoon is believed to come from the Arabic word "mousim" meaning season. To meteorologists it has come to define prevailing winds which reverse to bring alternate wet and dry seasons. To the layman it is synonymous with a rainy season.

In fact half the world's population, living in the tropics and sub-tropics, rely on the summer monsoon for much of their life-giving rain. In particular, much of the Indian sub-continent gets to reach New Delhi by the beginning of July. During September, as Asia cools, it starts to retreat, but not until the end of November does it leave the south of the country.

In any one year the monsoon takes place in a fixed and starts. Periods of torrential storms are followed by days of sunny weather. More important, from year to year the timing of the start and end of the monsoon varies greatly.

This year the problem is that the onset of the rains has been delayed and so much of the country faces increasingly severe drought. But recent variations in the monsoon have shown how much it can differ from year to year. The abundant rains of 1978 and 1980 straddled a year of drought

TROPICAL AGRICULTURE

Mystery of the monsoon

BY A SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE DELAY in the start of the monsoon in India is causing increasing concern. So, as in 1973 and 1979, the food supplies of hundreds of millions of people hang on the capricious behaviour of these enigmatic weather patterns.

The word monsoon is believed to come from the Arabic word "mousim" meaning season. To meteorologists it has come to define prevailing winds which reverse to bring alternate wet and dry seasons. To the layman it is synonymous with a rainy season.

In fact half the world's population, living in the tropics and sub-tropics, rely on the summer monsoon for much of their life-giving rain. In particular, much of the Indian sub-continent gets to reach New Delhi by the beginning of July. During September, as Asia cools, it starts to retreat, but not until the end of November does it leave the south of the country.

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and great hardship when food-grain production fell by nearly 17 per cent.

Last year it was even more erratic. It started bang on time, reaching New Delhi on June 22. Initially it appeared bountiful, but subsequently proved to be patchy with floods and drought occurring in adjacent regions.

Jaipur had the worst floods on record, while much of the rest of Rajasthan continued to have its third year of drought. It retreated over a month early, thus threatening widespread drought, only to produce heavy rains in September which saved much of the harvest.

The result of this erratic behaviour was that the harvest fell short of target with the Punjab and Uttar Pradesh being worst hit. Power cuts had to be instituted to conserve scarce hydroelectric resources for gathering in the harvest. In the end India had to import nearly 3m tonnes of wheat, putting a severe strain on her meagre reserves of hard currency.

Such failures are not new to India. The spectre of famine has haunted the country for centuries. Indeed there is considerable evidence that the monsoon was less reliable before 1920. So India cannot bank on doing as well as we have done in recent decades.

The underlying causes of the wayward behaviour of the monsoon, though the subject of intense study, are not yet understood. Indeed, the monsoon

soon was the subject of the earliest scientific efforts at long-range weather forecasting after the terrible famine of 1974. But the value of being able to predict more accurately its development each year is of immense potential benefit to India.

A number of theories have been advanced. Clearly, the amount of moisture transported northwards is influenced by the temperature of the Indian Ocean. So better measurements of this parameter may hold the key to improved forecasts.

More subtle is what controls the timing of the switch of the jetstream back and forth across the Himalayas. The development of summer weather patterns seems to play a part in this crucial shift. Both, in turn, may be influenced by such factors as the extent of snow cover over Asia in the previous winter and sea surface temperatures over the North Pacific and North Atlantic.

Whatever the causes, the message is clear. The crucial dependence of India on this single well-defined but little understood seasonal movement of the weather makes the monsoon possibly the single most important challenge for weather forecasters. But until that challenge is met, the monsoon will in Carlyle's words reflect the "mysterious course of Providence."

EEC to take more tapioca

BY LARRY KLINGER IN BRUSSELS

The EEC yesterday agreed to import up to an extra 500,000 tonnes of Thailand manioc, the tapioca animal feed supplement. The EEC's Council of Agriculture Ministers rejected demands from the Netherlands for the Community to accept an extra 1m tonnes above Thailand's 5m-tonne quota for this year until its traders were given an assurance of increased imports.

Thailand's quota for this year, was expected to have been completely filled by next month and the Dutch argued that without extra imports their feed compounding industry could be in trouble.

Ratification of the Thai agreement is now expected to follow speedily with the Netherlands also winning a concession from its EEC partners to allow the Thais to ship some of their 1982 quota this year, if it poses no disruption threat to the EEC internal animal feeds market.

Reuter.

GAS OIL FUTURES

After opening unchanged prices fell quickly in thin conditions on bearish crude news and having reached the lows, failed to follow New York prices further down, reports Premier Man.

Month Yester'day's + or - Business Done

CRUDE OIL-FOB (\$ per barrel)

Arabian Light..... 51.50-52.10 | -0.45 | |

Iranian Light..... 51.50-52.00 | -0.25 | |

Arabian Heavy..... 53.00-53.80 | -0.07 | |

North Sea (Forrest)..... 55.25-55.80 | -0.14 | |

African (Bonny U/H)..... 54.00-53.80 | -0.30 | |

PRODUCTS—North West Europe

Premium gasoline..... 240.54-545 | +0.5 | |

Gas oil..... 265.27-576 | +5.0 | |

Heavy fuel oil..... 165.165 | +2.0 | |

Turnover: 2,678 (2,795), lots of 100 tonnes.

BRITISH COMMODITY MARKET

BASE METALS

A BOMB SCARE in Plantation House led to disrupted and restricted trading on the London Metal Exchange. COPPER fell 62.50 cents to 37.50, lead 10.50 cents and zinc 10.50 cents. LEAD and zinc closed at £334 and £424.50 respectively.

ALUMINIUM was finally £365.50 and £425.50 respectively. COTTON closed at 10.50 cents per pound, up 1.50 cents.

WHEAT futures fell 1.50 cents to 10.50 cents per pound, up 1.50 cents.

COFFEE futures fell 1.50 cents to 10.50 cents per pound, up 1.50 cents.

SOYABEAN MEAL futures fell 1.50 cents to 10.50 cents per pound, up 1.50 cents.

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INTERNATIONAL COMPANIES and FINANCE

Morton-Norwich and Thiokol to merge

By Paul Taylor in New York

MORTON-NORWICH, the U.S. salt and household goods manufacturer, and **Thiokol**, the chemicals and rocket propulsion systems company, are to merge to form **Morton-Thiokol**, with annual sales of \$260m.

Morton-Norwich is cash-rich following the sale of its pharmaceuticals division to **Procter and Gamble** earlier this year. It is making cash tender offers of \$50 a share for 5.7m common shares in **Thiokol**, which will give it a 45 per cent stake for \$285m.

As part of a series of other share deals, **Morton-Norwich** will make a tender offer for at least \$70m of its common stock.

This is to be followed by a merger of **Thiokol** and a subsidiary of **Morton-Norwich** in which **Thiokol** shareholders will be offered shares in **Morton-Norwich** in return for their own common stock.

Under the provision of the agreement, which has to be approved by shareholders of both companies in September, the new company will also have the option to buy up to 1m additional shares of its common stock.

Morton-Norwich has been looking for a possible merger or purchase since it completed the sale of **Norwich-Eaton Pharmaceuticals** for \$37.1m to **Procter and Gamble** last month. That move triggered a row with **Rhone-Poulenc**, which was eventually resolved by the French company setting its 20.3 per cent stake in **Morton** back to the company for \$15m.

The balance of these transactions, topped up with some short-term borrowing, will finance **Morton-Norwich**'s side of the merger.

Charles Locke, chairman and chief executive of **Morton-Norwich**, will become chairman and chief executive of **Morton-Thiokol**. **Mr Robert Davis**, chairman and chief executive of **Thiokol**, will become president and chief operating officer.

The two men last said the company would be a market leader in specialty chemicals, salt and household products and high technology propulsion systems.

It would be the world's largest manufacturer of solid fuel rocket motors for such projects as the U.S. space shuttle, the Trident missile and the MX missile.

Morton Salt is a brand leader with sales last year of \$320m.

IBM to raise \$500m as U.S. bond rates ease

By David Lascelles in New York

IBM, the giant computer company, yesterday joined the fast-lengthening list of companies hoping to sell debt as the bond market strengthens.

The company plans to issue \$500m of 25-year, convertible subordinated debentures which will be co-managed by **Salomon Brothers** and **Merrill Lynch**. The proceeds will be used to finance construction of facilities and for rental equipment.

The issue adds to the already enormous overhang of proposed debt offerings on Wall Street, many of which will give it a 45 per cent stake for \$285m.

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Write-offs push Armco into red

By Our New York Staff

ARMCO, the fifth largest U.S. steel company, reported yesterday a profit of \$85.5m or \$1.25 a share for the second quarter of this year to cover curtailment of its steelmaking activities and redundancy.

The write-off translated into \$63.9m after tax, and has forced the company into the red for the quarter to the tune of \$37.4m.

In a strikingly gloomy assessment, Mr Harry Holiday, chairman, said the recession had been longer and deeper than expected. "Therefore, there is

no solid evidence that the second half of this year will bring an economic recovery."

Armco has already decided to slash its proposed \$740m capital outlays this year by \$25.5m compared to \$773m.

The latest quarter's results bring Armco's first half loss to \$39.7m or 64 cents a share compared to a profit of \$157.3m or \$2.74 a share last year.

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A subsidiary of
Sketchley PLC
has acquired
Rentex Services Corporation

The undersigned acted as financial advisor to
Sketchley PLC

Morgan Grenfell Incorporated,
New York

July 1982

This announcement appears as a matter of record only

July 1982

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Agent Bank

ORION ROYAL BANK LIMITED

A member of The Royal Bank of Canada Group

Banca Commerciale Italiana

has acquired

LITCO Bancorporation of New York, Inc.
(parent company of Long Island Trust Company, N.A.)

The undersigned, as advisor to Banca Commerciale Italiana, helped to
initiate this transaction and assisted in the negotiations.

Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb

Incorporated

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July 13, 1982

The Republic of Panama
U.S. \$50,000,000
Floating Rate Serial Notes due 1991
For the six months
21st July, 1982 to 21st January, 1983

In accordance with the provisions of the Notes,
notice is hereby given that the rate of interest
has been fixed at 15 1/4 per cent. per annum, and that the interest
payable on the relevant interest payment date,
21st January, 1983 against Coupon No. 7 will be U.S. \$773.44.

The Industrial Bank of Japan, Limited
Agent Bank

**THE LONG-TERM
CREDIT BANK OF
JAPAN FINANCE N.V.**
**U.S. \$30,000,000 Floating Rate
Notes Due 1989**

For the six months
19th July, 1982 to 19th January, 1983
the Notes will carry an
interest rate of 15 1/4% per annum
with a coupon amount of U.S. \$795.42

Bankers Trust Company, London
Agent Bank

**France plans
further aid
for biotech
companies**

By David Marsh in Paris

A THREE-YEAR investment programme of more than FFr 1bn (\$145m) by companies involved in the biotechnology industry has been proposed by a commission set up by the French Government.

In a report published yesterday, the commission recommended that the Government—which is already pumping well over FFr 1bn a year into biology-based research institutes—step up its financial aid by a further FFr 200m a year.

Biotechnology—the harnessing of living organisms in industrial processes—is one of the main "new technology" sectors looming large in the French Socialists' ambitious drive for science-based economic growth.

M. Jean Pierre Chevrenement, Minister of Research and Industry, told a press conference that France had "no time to lose" in making up ground lost.

The aim of the newly-combined "super-Ministry," formed in the government reshuffle at the end of last month, is for French companies to boost their share of the world biotechnology market to 10 per cent in 10 years, from 7.5 per cent at present.

The main companies involved in France's biotechnology effort are all controlled by the state—the oil company, Elf Aquitaine, and its pharmaceutical subsidiary, Sanofi; Products Chimiques UGINE Kuhmann, the chemicals division of Pechiney UGINE Kuhmann; and the large chemical group, Rhône Poulenec.

Other companies participating in projects in this industry include Roussel-Uclaf, BSN Gervais Danone and the pharmaceuticals concern, Merieux.

In its report, which took just under a year to complete, the commission called for action to restructure research efforts to improve information about the new industry and to speed up training of biotechnologists.

The commission suggests that government financing for the industry should be in the form of tax credits, preferential loans and fiscal investment incentives.

The Government is already spending FFr 1.1bn this year on laboratories and public research institutes connected with biotechnology—a sum which is due to rise to FFr 1.4bn next year.

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21st July, 1982 to 21st January, 1983

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Bankers Trust Company, London
Agent Bank

Bosch in DM375m AEG deal

BY KEVIN DONE IN FRANKFURT

ROBERT BOSCH, the West German motor components and electrical group, has spent DM 375m (\$152m) buying into the telecommunications interests of the financially-ailing AEG-Telfunken concern.

This was disclosed yesterday by Herr Hans Merkle, chief executive, who nonetheless ruled out any Bosch involvement in a West German national rescue of AEG, a solution widely canvassed by the trade unions.

Bosch was ready to increase its stake in AEG's telecommunications operations, said Herr Merkle. He hinted strongly that in the event of an AEG collapse Bosch would be interested in buying certain other AEG assets.

To date Bosch has bought into

the following AEG activities:

• For DM 100m it has taken a 20 per cent share in ATN—AEG-Telfunken Nachrichtentechnik—the AEG telecommunications division. AEG has retained a 51 per cent interest. Other shareholders are Mannesmann, 20 per cent, and Allianz, 9 per

The three groups—Bosch, Mannesmann and Allianz—had pooled their interests in a holding company, said Herr Merkle, and had taken an option to increase their stake in ATN to a simple majority if there was a change in AEG's ownership.

This move protects the primacy of the three companies' role in ATN if a major new shareholder buys into AEG

as part of a general rescue. Both General Electric Company of the UK and United Technologies of the U.S. have shown interest in taking a substantial minority stake in AEG's complete capital goods operations, which would include the 51 per cent-owned telecommunications division.

• For DM 375m Bosch bought 75.5 per cent of Telenorma—AEG has the remaining 24.5 per cent, which in turn owns 41 per cent of Teleforschung und Normalzeit, the successful telephone systems company. Bosch has passed on a third of its stake to J. M. Voith, the mechanical engineering group, which like Bosch is privately owned, reducing its direct investment to DM 250m.

At the beginning of 1983 Telenorma will exercise an option to build its interest in T & N to a substantial majority. • For DM 25m Bosch has bought 20 per cent of Olympia, AEG's loss-making office information equipment subsidiary. A further 29 per cent is held by holding companies dominated by the Deutsche and Dresden banks and the Westdeutsche Landesbank. The stake in Olympia had already been written down, in the Bosch balance sheet," said Herr Merkle.

The acquisitions mark an important diversification for the Bosch group, which still made 62.5 per cent of last year's total sales of DM 12.9bn from motor components, both electrical and mechanical.

Buoyant motor business boosts turnover

BY OUR FRANKFURT STAFF

SALES AT Robert Bosch increased by 9.7 per cent to DM 12.9bn last year, and have continued to move ahead in 1982.

Boosted by the strong performance of the West German car industry, one of the few bright spots in the German economy, sales rose by a further 10.5 per cent in the first half of 1982 to DM 6.95bn (\$2.81bn). Bosch expects growth to slow in the second

Volume sales last year rose by only 3 per cent, however, after allowing for currency movements and inflation, while volume sales showed a rise of 8.1 per cent in the first six months this year.

The bank has bought into profit, achieving an after-tax surplus of DM 21m last year compared with a loss of DM 65m in 1980. (Of the 1980 loss DM 51m was accounted for by special depreciation measures covering earlier years).

After several years of heavy capital spending Bosch slowed the pace of expenditure last year with a fall in DM 560m from DM 781m in 1980. Capital expenditure is expected to rise again this year to DM 750m.

Investment has been concentrated on development and production of injection equipment for petrol and diesel engines as well as on other electrical and electronic vehicle components.

In weak areas of business Bosch has been forced to impose short-time working over the past 18 months and it has also cut the workforce significantly. Worldwide the number of Bosch employees fell last year by 6 per cent to 112,786.

The company is striving to increase its activities in the North American market and the share of the Americas in group turnover jumped to 13.6 per cent (DM 1.76bn) from 11.2 per cent (DM 1.32bn) in 1980. It is still dependent for 63.8 per cent (DM 8.26bn) of sales in the EEC, with a further 13.8 per cent (DM 1.78bn) coming from other European countries.

Bank buys Hachette stake

BY OUR PARIS STAFF

CREDIT LYONNAIS, the second largest of France's big three nationalised banks, has taken a 14.6 per cent indirect stake in Hachette, the premier publishing company now independent of the Matra arms group.

The bank has bought a 27 per cent share in the holding company Marlis, which owns 54 per cent of Hachette. The stakes were acquired for an undisclosed sum, from the newly-nationalised banking group, Paribas (which formerly had 10

per cent of Marlis) and from the radio station, Europe 1 (formerly 17 per cent).

Hachette came under the control of Matra at the end of 1980, but the arms group hived off its shareholding as part of the Government's nationalisation plans.

The fresh share restructuring is not expected to lead to any changes in corporate strategy at Hachette, which incurred a loss of FFr 15.4m (\$2.2m) in 1981, but expects to return to profit this year.

In terms of local currencies, group sales rose by as much as 18.6 per cent, against a 16 per

Roche sales dip by 2%

BY JOHN WICKS IN ZURICH

SALES OF Roche, the Swiss chemicals group, fell by 2 per cent in the first half of this year, because of the increased strength of the domestic currency. According to the Basle-based parent company, F. Hoffmann-La Roche, combined sales of the companies controlled by Roche and its Canadian holding affiliate, Sapac, totalled SwFr 3.59bn (\$1.61bn) compared with SwFr 3.46bn a year earlier.

Although no indication is given of current earnings, Mr Fritz Gerber, Hoffmann-La Roche chairman, had said in May that 1982 profits ought not to be lower than those for last year.

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July 13, 1982

Gas fuels battle for OCA board

OIL COMPANY OF AUSTRALIA, which was launched on the back of the energy boom late in 1978, will be fortunate if it celebrates its third birthday as an independent oil and gas explorer.

Hartogen Energy, with a stake of 18 per cent in the company, is pounding on its boardroom door and hopes to unseat all the incumbent directors of OCA at an extraordinary general meeting it has requisitioned for July 23.

OCA's directors are outraged that Hartogen should try to set the precedent of using a modest minority stake to gain total boardroom control. They fear that other OCA shareholders will be disadvantaged if ever a Hartogen-appointed board evaluates a takeover offer from Hartogen.

Meanwhile, Hartogen is attempting through the courts to test whether the OCA board had the power and the need to increase its capital through the defensive allotment of 10 per cent of its shares to Boral, the Sydney-based building products and gas distribution group, the day after Hartogen revealed its holding early last month.

As part of this deal, Sir Eric Need, Boral's chairman, joined the OCA board and Boral was given right of first refusal over any gas produced by OCA. This was the result, says OCA, of talks under way since last August.

Biggest shareholder

Both these points have ranked with Hartogen, which is OCA's biggest single shareholder but has no boardroom representation. In its efforts to win votes to its cause it has drawn into question the propriety of such a relationship between potential sellers and buyers of gas. It has also questioned the ability of the OCA board—or Boral—to carry through to production OCA's rich gas reserves in Queensland.

However, it seems certain that if Hartogen fails in its attempt to replace the OCA

directors—who include Lord Catto, chairman of Morgan Grenfell, the UK merchant bank which introduced OCA to the market through its Australian subsidiary—Hartogen will seek to win control through a takeover offer, a move likely to draw out Boral as "white knight."

Indeed, after revealing its almost 20 per cent stake early last month Hartogen made a share exchange offer for 14m OCA shares to lift its stake to 40 per cent (86 per cent after the Boral allotment). However, the Sydney Stock Exchange's insistence on a cash alternative, later backed by the courts, led to the bid's withdrawal.

In the meantime a new companies Act came into force on its rich potential — and it

is trying to sell its half share in the producing Wambo coal mine in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales, which could bring in A\$20m to A\$25m.

At stake is OCA's highly promising gas properties in the Denison Trough, part of the Bowen Basin in central Queensland, as well as other exploration tracts.

Its Denison Trough Yellow Bank number two appraisal well last week produced strong flows of 2.62m cubic feet of gas a day from its third level, considerably upgrading the field's potential. OCA has 40 per cent of the Denison Trough with CSR holding the remainder.

If the field measures up to its

expectations it will be a major gas producer in the state of Queensland.

Hartogen Energy is trying to use an 18 per cent stake to gain boardroom control of Oil Company of Australia, a promising oil and gas producer.

Lachlan Drummond reports from Sydney

July 1. It demands in part up-to-date audited accounts before a group can launch a bid. With these due from Hartogen within weeks a new offer is likely to emerge.

At the same time Boral has been adding to its existing stake in OCA through market purchases and the financial support of the OCA board with which to back a bid.

With OCA shares and options trading at around 60 cents and 26 cents respectively, a bid somewhere above 70 cents a share is thought necessary, placing a value of around A\$60m (U.S.\$61m) on OCA.

Although Hartogen, with a share-capital of around A\$70m, previously made a share-based bid it has access to substantial funds and could if pressed offer a cash alternative. It would likely seek only control and not outright ownership. It is cur-

rently trying to sell its half share in the producing Wambo coal mine in the Hunter Valley of New South Wales, which could bring in A\$20m to A\$25m.

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U.S. \$60,000,000



Industrias Peñoles, S.A. de C.V.

Operated in the United Mexican States

Floating Rate Notes Due 1989

In accordance with the provisions of the Notes, notice is hereby given that for the three month Interest Period from 19th July, 1982 to 19th October, 1982 the Notes will carry an Interest Rate of 152% per annum and the Coupon Amount per U.S. \$10,000 will be U.S. \$402.50.

Credit Suisse First Boston Limited
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Banko di Santo Spirito (Luxembourg)

South Korean listed companies lift profits

SEOUL—Financial reports of 290 companies listed on the Korean Stock Exchange showed that profits rose by an average 30 per cent in 1981 and sales by 31 per cent, the Korean Securities Supervisory Board said. If all financial institutions and insurance companies are excluded, profits of the remaining 249 companies increased by 38 per cent and sales by 63 per cent.

However, 66 of the 290 companies incurred losses last year, according to the Board. The same number of concerns reported losses for 1980. Profits of 288 listed companies declined by an average 42 per cent in 1980 on sales up by an average of 26 per cent.

Company results and sales figures have been converted to U.S. dollars using the won-dollar exchange rates prevailing at the end of 1980 and 1981. Statistics for both years are based on unconsolidated company reports. Some subsidiaries' losses are not included.

Many Korean corporations, including many subsidiaries and affiliates of major groups, are not listed. Reports on the listed companies therefore do not provide a complete picture of the corporate sector's performance.

While many listed companies reported increases in earnings, others said profits declined or disappeared. In some cases, important companies that were profitable in 1980 reported losses for 1981.

One securities analyst traced the mixed performance to the recession of 1980. The problems of that year carried over into 1981, and companies found themselves short of operating funds, the analyst said. As a result, they borrowed increasing amounts of money, and the enlarged debt burden pushed profit down.

Korea's gross national product increased about 7 per cent in 1981 with agriculture and the fisheries industry making the largest contribution to growth. Moreover, GNP is calculated using sales figures and most listed companies reported increases in sales, even if profits declined.

Prospects for an earnings improvement this year picked up sharply last month with the announcement of a government stimulus package. Corporate taxes and interest rates were slashed, but analysts say the ability to increase profits by expanding markets will depend largely on how the U.S., Japan, and other trading countries fare in the second half.

The financial scandal resulting from a swindle on Seoul's private-loan market shot holes in the earlier optimism, one analyst said. Construction companies were hardest hit because of their heavy use of private loan funds.

Electronics and general trading companies, by contrast, are expected to show some improvement in the second half, while the petrochemical industry is expected to remain depressed.

The motor-car industry continued to take the hardest blows in 1981. Kia Industrial Company, one of the country's three motor manufacturers, again led the list of losers on the exchange. Kia posted a loss of \$88m compare with the \$36m deficit of 1980. Hyundai Motor Company, the nation's leading car manufacturer, reported a loss of \$23m for the second consecutive year.

By comparison, Daewoo Corporation, the main company of the country's largest diversified group, reported a profit of \$90m, the largest of any listed company. Dong Ah Construction Company was the next largest earner, reporting a 1981 profit of \$28m, down 46 per cent from 1980.

The number of listed companies withholding dividends last year increased to 79 from 71 in 1980. The average dividend paid fell to 58 won a share from 79 won in 1980.

Advance in group earnings at Fujitsu

By Our Financial Staff

FUJITSU, Japan's largest computer maker, has reported an 18 per cent increase in consolidated net profits for the year ended March 31, 1982 (\$124m).

Consolidated pre-tax profits rose by 47 per cent to Y55.8bn on sales ahead by 15.2 per cent to Y800.3bn (\$3.14bn).

Fujitsu had earlier reported a 24 per cent rise in parent company net profits to Y22.8bn on sales ahead by 15.4 per cent to Y678.1bn.

The company said its strongest group performance was in sales of computers and electronic components.

Fujitsu has said it can provide OCA with a board experienced in turning exploration potential into production. Evidence includes its operation of the Kincora gas field which represents roughly 15 per cent of the state of Queensland.

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Alcoa Australia shelves Portland smelter project

By MICHAEL THOMPSON-NOEL IN SYDNEY

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CURRENCIES and MONEY

Dollar weak

The dollar was sharply weaker in currency markets yesterday in reaction to a moderate rise in U.S. money supply. The increase was considerably below many speculations and Euro-dollar rates were lower as a result. Most of the dollar's losses occurred in the Far East with trading in London showing a steadier trend at the new lower levels as the market prepared itself for today's statement by Mr. Paul Volcker, U.S. Federal Reserve chairman.

Sterling was firmer all round despite a continued decline in domestic interest rates.

DOLLAR — EMS member (weakest). Trade weighted index (Bank of England) 120.2 against 121.0 on Friday and 119.7 in months ago. Three-month interbank 9.42% per cent (10.47% per cent six months ago). Annual inflation 5.8 per cent (5.2 per cent previous month). The D-mark showed little overall change within the EMS yesterday. Attention was focussed on the weaker trend in the dollar following a sharp fall in Euro-dollar rates. The Bundesbank sold a nominal \$8.4m at the fixing where the dollar fell to DM 2.4647 from DM 2.4941 on Friday. The narrowing of interest rate differentials was also beneficial for the D-mark. Elsewhere sterling rose 1.0% against 1.0% in DM 2.4835 from DM 2.4775 and the Swiss franc was higher at DM 1.1745.

DUTCH GUILDER — EMS member (second weakest). Trade weighted index 115.8 against 115.7 on Friday and 114.6 six months ago. Three-month interbank 9.1% per cent (10.2 per cent six months ago). Annual inflation 6.5 per cent (6.3 per cent previous month). The dollar started to improve in late trading but still finished below Friday's levels. Against the Deutsche mark, it fell 1.6% to DM 2.4635 from DM 2.4775 and wpt 2.0990 compared with wpt 2.1025. It was slightly firmer in terms of the Japanese yen at DM 2.4545 from wpt 2.4535. The improvement in London was continued in early New York trading despite cuts to 16% U.S. banks' prime rates, helped to some extent by a little profit-taking.

STERLING — Trade weighted index 91.4 against 91.5 at noon and the opening and 90.8 on Friday (91.5 six months ago). Three-month interbank 12.1% per cent (13.1 per cent six months ago). The dollar fell to £1.7190 from £1.7495, but sterling improved to £1.7370 from £1.7350 against the dollar but rose to £1.7380 before coming back to £1.7425. The dollar's improvement in sterling trading since 1.7290 at the close, still an improvement of 1.5%. Sterling was also firmer against European currencies, closing at DM 1.28 compared with DM 1.27 and SwFr 3.88 from SwFr 3.8500.

Changes are in ECU, therefore positive change denotes a weak currency. Adjustment calculated by Financial Times.

EMS EUROPEAN CURRENCY UNIT RATES

	ECU	Currency	% change	ECU	U.S. dollar	% change	ECU	U.S. dollar	% change	ECU	U.S. dollar	% change
Debtors Franc	44.5704	45.0603	+0.20	-0.02	-1.5901	-						
Danish Krone	8.22400	8.17234	-0.74	+0.98	-1.6430	-						
French Franc	2.33779	2.38525	+1.25	+1.03	-1.0388	-						
Dutch Guilder	6.51357	6.57722	-0.55	-0.77	-1.3900	-						
Irish Punt	1.2527	1.25105	-0.05	+0.05	-1.1604	-						
Italian Lira	1.35207	1.365371	+1.67	+0.89	-1.16261	-						
Swiss Franc	1.32322	1.32322	-2.00	-2.00	-4.1369	-						

* Selling rate.

EXCHANGE CROSS RATES

	July 19	Pound Sterling	U.S. Dollar	Deutschmark	Japanese Yen	French Franc	Swiss Franc	Dutch Guilder	Italian Lira	Canadian Dollar	Dollar	Belgian Franc
U.S. Dollar	1.076	1.758	4.290	642.0	11,913	5,450	4,740	2395	2,189	81.60	81.60	81.60
Deutschmark	0.576	2.469	254.4	6,856	2,101	2,728	1,378	1,260	46.56			
Japanese Yen 1,000	2.262	4.055	1.391	2,777	8,555	1,105	556.5	510	19.02			
French Franc 10	0.859	1.459	3,601	371.0	10	3,064	3,979	2010	1,828	58.00		
Swiss Franc	0.274	0.476	1.175	12.1	3,864	1	1,299	656.5	0.600	22.56		
Dutch Guilder	0.211	0.367	0.905	95.25	2,515	0.770	1	505.3	0.462	17.22		
Italian Lira 1,000	0.418	0.735	1.791	184.8	4,974	1,924	1,979	1,000	0.914	34.07		
Canadian Dollar	0.357	0.793	1.980	201.9	5,442	1,867	2,165	1,094	1	57.38		
Swiss Franc	1.236	2.129	5,257	541.7	14.60	4,473	5,809	2,935	2,683	100		

FT LONDON INTERBANK FIXING (11.00 a.m. JULY 19)

	3 months U.S. dollars	6 months U.S. dollars	
bid 14.15	offer 14.56	bid 14.12	offer 14.58

EURO-CURRENCY INTEREST RATES (Market closing Rates)

U.S.	July 19	Sterling	U.S. Dollar	Dutch Guilder	Swiss Franc	D-mark	French Franc	Italian Lira	Belgian Franc	Fin.	Yen	Danish Krone
Short-term	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5
2 days' notice	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5
5 days' notice	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5
One month	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5
Three months	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5
Six months	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5
One year	12.1-12.5	12.1-12.5	15.1-16.5	8.5-9.1	14.5-15.5	17.19	12.1-14	14.5-15.5	6.5-6.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5	13.5-15.5

SDR linked deposit one month 11.1-12.5% per cent; three months 12.1-12.5% per cent; six months 12.1-12.5% per cent; one year 12.1-12.5% per cent; two years 12.1-12.5% per cent; three years 12.1-12.5% per cent; four years 12.1-12.5% per cent; five years 12.1-12.5% per cent; nominal closing rates.

Short-term rates are for U.S. dollars, Canadian dollars and Japanese yen; others two days' notice.

The following rates were quoted for London dollar certificates of deposit: one month 12.10-13.50 per cent; three months 13.50-15.50 per cent; six months 13.70-15.50 per cent.

The following rates were quoted for London dollar certificates of deposit: one year 12.70-13.50 per cent.

Source: London Interbank Offered Rate (LIBOR) and London Money Rates.

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Tuesday July 20 1982



BR spells out cost of Aslef strike

BY HAZEL DUFFY, TRANSPORT CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH RAIL will tell the Government shortly that, after counting the cost of the two-week Aslef strike, it cannot possibly stay within the External Financing Limit (EFL) set by the Government for 1982-83.

The EFL is the maximum figure BR may receive from the Government in grants and loans.

The strike cost BR about £100m in lost revenue and the suspension of the Public Service Obligation (PSO) grant paid by the Government for the "social railway" meant that it was deprived of another £31m.

BR says it is not yet possible to estimate the future effects of the strike in terms of passenger and freight business which will desert the railways, but it is clear that BR's overall loss in

the current financial year will be at least £200m.

The Government's response to BR's financial plight is expected to be determined by the progress British Railways Board makes on other productivity rosters—the issue at the heart of the Aslef dispute—which were agreed with its trade unions last summer.

They include the removal of guards from freight trains and single manning of engines and involve both Aslef and the National Union of Railways.

Government pleasure over the defeat of Aslef on flexible rostering is tempered by its desire to see substantial progress on these other points

before it will soften its hard line on BR's finances.

At present it seems that the most BR can expect is a portion of the PSO in recognition of the limited services it was able to run during the strike.

BR will tell the Government that it wants the sanctioning of some of its investment plans, particularly electrification of the north-east coast main line, so that the board can demonstrate to the unions that it has the Government's backing on investment.

BR would then be able to determine the time at which it could go ahead on electrification, a project which would fall outside the Government's strict control over the railways' financial resources for the remainder of the year.

Tribunal may be asked for freeze on pay

BY PHILIP BASSETT, LABOUR CORRESPONDENT

BRITISH RAIL is likely to call on the industry's forthcoming arbitration tribunal on pay to make no wage award for the railways' 167,000 workers until BR has secured agreement in a ballot to productivity improvements outstanding since last year's 11 per cent pay deal.

BR is confident that it will succeed in the move following its victories over pay and productivity in disputes with both the National Union of Railways and the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen.

The NUR earlier this month called off its strike after one day. Aslef abandoned its action at the weekend after pressure from the TUC, which effectively supported BR over flexible rostering.

BR will make no pay offer ahead of the hearing of the Railway Staffs' National Tribunal, chaired by Lord McCarthy. The 5 per cent from September originally offered by BR was withdrawn when the

NUR went on strike.

The outstanding productivity improvements involve mainly manning on the Bedford-St Pancras line and the elimination of second drivers and freight train guards.

In making its case to the RSNT, BR will stress the financial damage to the industry inflicted by the Aslef strike. If the RSNT were to accept the idea of making no award until productivity is resolved, BR may well return to the tribunal later on pay.

Rail services returned quickly to normal yesterday following the end of the strike at midnight on Sunday. After a shaky start in the morning, BR reported that by midday, services were running at about 98 per cent, or about normal.

The trade union backlash against the settlement is growing. A number of Aslef branches are passing resolutions seeking the union's disaffiliation from the TUC, although these seem unlikely to be acted upon. The calls follow the crucial intervention of the TUC's

Transport Workers, and Mr Clive Jenkins, of the white collar union ASTMS, were associated with the decision at the weekend.

Mr Arthur Scarsill, the Mineworkers' President, said the National Union of Mineworkers fully understands Aslef's decision to call off the strike "in view of the utter failure of the TUC to support the union's fight against the BR board and the Tory Government."

This failure to carry out basic trade union solidarity will only serve to weaken the trade union movement at a time when it needs to develop total unity in face of the Government's political and economic attacks on our standards of life."

Mr Ken Cameron, general secretary of the Fire Brigades Union, said the TUC should have continued to support Aslef.

"If we are going to give in every time an employer threatens the sack then it's a sad day."

Bitterness as drivers resume working. Page 9

Schmidt and Colombo to see Shultz

By John Wyles in Brussels

CHANCELLOR Helmut Schmidt of West Germany and Sig Emilio Colombo, the Italian Foreign Minister, are making separate visits to Washington today for talks with Mr George Shultz, the new US Secretary of State, in a bid to defuse the conflicts dividing the US and the EEC.

Their efforts follow the failure of talks in Washington at the end of last week to resolve the row over EEC steel exports to the US. After hearing a report of the negotiations from two European Commission vice-presidents, Herr Wilhelm Haferkamp and Viscount Etienne Davignon, Community foreign ministers were said yesterday to be gloomy about the outlook.

They will discuss the situation in more detail today and may give the European Commission the green light to open a new front against the US in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade. Although the Commission has not finally decided, it may well seek authorisation from GATT to take retaliatory measures against imports from the US, benefiting from the so-called disc system—a system of tax concessions for US exporters.

The Community secured a ruling from GATT nearly a decade ago that this amounted to a form of subsidy.

Both Chancellor Schmidt and Sig Colombo are expected to raise the broad range of current EEC-US tensions when they see Mr Shultz over the next two days.

They will repeat the EEC view that Washington's action over the Soviet pipeline, EEC steel and its attack on the Community's export subsidies for agricultural products are doing untold damage to relations with the US.

According to the Commissioners' account of the steel negotiations with Mr Malcolm Baldrige, the US Secretary for Commerce, an agreement remains out of reach for three reasons.

• The range of products to be covered by EEC export limits are still in dispute. In Washington, the Commission added wire rods and carbon bars to the five products it was willing to control. The US still pressed for the inclusion of steel tubes.

• The quantities to be exported by the EEC are in contention. The Commission continues to argue for a 6.7 per cent share of the US market, but the US wants a ceiling of 5.2 per cent.

• Both sides are looking at a three-year export limitation but the Commission wants a US guarantee that its steel industry will not file any more anti-dumping complaints against EEC steel during that period. The US argues that it cannot promise that its citizens will not resort to the law of the land for protection—in this case the anti-dumping legislation.

British Steel aiming for trading profit of £79m, directors reveal

BY IAN RODGER

BRITISH STEEL aims to make a trading profit of £79m in the year to March 31, 1983, its first profit before interest charges in six years and a dramatic improvement on last year's loss of £242m.

This target forms part of the corporation's revised corporate plan for the next three years, submitted to the Government in March. The plan also forecasts interest charges this year of £84m, which would leave a pre-tax loss of £55m compared with a loss of £333m in 1981-82.

Details of the plan have been published in the annual report by BSC directors to their employees. The report points out that the profit target was developed from plans submitted by operating divisions and stress: "The management of each business is committed to their achievement."

The success of the plan depends on improvements in productivity, operating standards and energy conservation plus reductions in working capital.

The directors say the corporation's operating costs last year amounted to more than £250 per tonne of steel produced, compared with just under £200 in West Germany. Estimates of productivity indicate that the number of tonnes produced per man year rose 20 per cent in

West Germany between 1977 and 1981 and 50 per cent at BSC, although from a lower base.

BSC's plan aims to maintain the corporation's capacity, but the directors point out that "failure to achieve competitive costs could result in the closure of one or more of the integrated steelmaking sites or individual businesses within the corporation."

BSC must also maintain its 50 per cent share of the UK steel market and continue to seek more rewarding export opportunities, the report says.

The revised plan takes account of the difficulties arising from the anti-dumping and countervailing duty suits filed by US steel producers against European steel companies.

But the corporation has nevertheless included in its 1982-83 budget a contingency item of £7m for "normal business fluctuations."

If this entire amount turns out to be needed, the company's total pre-tax loss would rise to £80m.

At the time the plan was prepared, BSC was forecasting last UK steel consumption in 1982-83 would be 12.25m to 12.5m tonnes, slightly higher than last year, but deliveries would be marginally lower than the 12.6m tonnes in 1981-82 because of

customer destocking.

"The most recent assessment of the UK economy and steel-using industries in 1982-83 is marginally more favourable than the plan forecasts," the directors say, "although the recent downturn in order intake is causing some concern for prospects in the immediate future."

The report also provides a few details of the forecasts for the subsequent two years of the plan. The trend of steel demand in the non-communist world is not expected to improve on that experienced since 1974-75, about 1 per cent growth per year in the industrial countries and 4 per cent in the developing countries.

The next peak year is expected to be 1984, when demand is estimated at 30m tonnes above the current level of about 460m tonnes a year.

Over this period, developing countries were forecast to increase capacity by about 30m tonnes, but this is likely to be offset by closures in established steel-making countries.

In the UK, a recovery in the economy and the steel-using industries should lead to improvements in consumption and export levels. Steel demand in 1984 could reach 13m tonnes, still well below the 1979 figure of nearly 20m tonnes.

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Continued from Page 1

British Telecom

is asked by the Industry Department, will reply to the statement of position awarded BT in the Telecommunications Act.

The department would retain responsibility for issuing licences to other telecommunications suppliers.

• Legislative safeguards for BT's existing pension obligations and special provisions for its employees.

• Reform of the Telegraph Act, governing the laying of public telecommunications systems. Some of the acts date back to the last century.

• The range of products to be covered by EEC export limits are still in dispute. In Washington, the Commission added wire rods and carbon bars to the five products it was willing to control. The US still pressed for the inclusion of steel tubes.

• The quantities to be exported by the EEC are in contention. The Commission continues to argue for a 6.7 per cent share of the US market, but the US wants a ceiling of 5.2 per cent.

• Both sides are looking at a three-year export limitation but the Commission wants a US guarantee that its steel industry will not file any more anti-dumping complaints against EEC steel during that period. The US argues that it cannot promise that its citizens will not resort to the law of the land for protection—in this case the anti-dumping legislation.

Continued from Page 1

Health workers action

cover as a consequence of the dispute.

The Department said that, in Wakefield, four hospitals had suffered total stoppages by all

Elsewhere, strike action had been very patchy, ranging greatly from hospital to hospital. The Department said

the Falklands.

Pub licensees will put all money collected direct in the fund's accounts at either the National Girobank or Barclays Bank.

Continued from Page 1

UK may seek deal with U.S.

Commerce Secretary. No date has been set for a further meeting.

The US Government is due by August 24 to make a final determination on whether the countervailing duties remain in place, which, in part explains the desire of both the UK Government and the Commission to resolve the steel issue speedily.

It is believed in London that the negotiation of a bilateral agreement is consistent with the rules of the European Coal and Steel Community, established under different treaty.

The Commission, unable to agree on an agreement for the Community as a whole, may reluctantly agree to one in sole option by the UK.

But such action would break the fragile unity of the EEC on D-Ferrous interests, which in my case are at stake since the US, effectively, avoided the EEC by picking out the British, French, Italian and Belgian upholders for the import of dutiable iron. The issue has been a major factor in the negotiations over recent months of US-EEC trade regulations.

Iraq claims Iranian invasion driven back

By James Dorsey in Kuwait

IRAN'S six-day-old invasion of Basra appears to have been brought to a standstill by fierce resistance, although heavy fighting is still reported in the border region north-east of Basra.

Diplomats remain unsure of the precise location of the fighting and are sceptical of Iraq's claim to have driven the Iranians back across the border.

Mr Tahar Yassin Ramadhan, First Deputy Prime Minister of Iran, claimed yesterday that a major battle had been fought on Sunday and that 3,400 Iranians had died in the past 48 hours.

He did not say where the fighting had taken place except that it was near Basra, Iraq's second largest city.

Mr Ramadhan described the Iranian invasion as "suicide" and said Iraq's forces were well prepared for the next Iranian offensive.

Western correspondents taken to a battlefield three miles east of the Shatt al-Arab waterway and just north of Basra said it was evident there had been intense fighting and Iraq appeared to have scored a major victory.

An Iraqi colonel claimed that there were no remaining Iranian positions inside Iraq. The correspondents were told that a force of 100,000 Iranians had been driven off and the bodies of 1,000 men removed from the battlefield.

South of Basra, the correspondents were shown what were said to be 800 prisoners of war captured during the invasion.

Intense artillery barrages could be heard in the distance.

Iraq claimed its forces had beaten off another Iraqi counter-attack and were continuing to consolidate their positions inside the border.

A military communiqué reported by Tehran radio claimed 500 Iraqis had been killed or wounded and 18 tanks destroyed during the latest fighting.

The radio also reported that Iraqi aircraft had bombed the towns of Khorramshah and Ilam from high altitude. It said scores of civilians were killed or injured.

Air raid sirens also sounded during the day in Tehran.

Diplomats in Kuwait said that, in spite of the lack of information about the course of the invasion, the Iraqis appeared to have encountered stiffer opposition than they expected.

President Saddam Hussein of Iraq has evidently had some success in boosting the morale of his troops after their disastrous collapse at Khorramshah in May.

The lack of Iranian military

communiqués is further evidence that the fighting is not going well for Iran.

It was also pointed out that the Iraqis left their dead on the battlefield last week instead of returning them to their home cities for martyrs' funerals, as had been the normal practice.

Jordan's lifeline for Iraq. Page 4

Ship insurance premiums to rise. Page 8

WORLDWIDE

Y day

midday

Y day

midday